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MISS ALICE HUGHES,

THE HON. MRS. CHARLES COVENTRY AND CHILDREN.

52, Gower Street.



**THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits**

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**MR. JUSTICE GRANTHAM
. . AND THE PUBLICANS.**

MODERATE-MINDED men will not fail to take a keen interest in the argument between Mr. Justice Grantham and the publicans of Croydon. The former has earned a distinction for plain speaking to licensed victuallers, and the latter have somewhat bitterly rejoined. Their answer was not marked by the tact and courtesy that the occasion demanded. It was rather in the Dame Quickly style to remind the judge that "it was through the action of the licensed victuallers of Croydon at the election in 1885 that he was returned to Parliament," thereby leading the way to his election to the judicial bench. That was by no means playing the game. It is presumed that the electors of Croydon chose a member of Parliament to represent them for his fitness, and it is an audacious presumption that henceforth he should be precluded from expressing his true opinions upon the drink question. Nor was it at all wise of the publicans to take this line. We willingly admit, and we believe the majority of fair-minded citizens will do the same, that only a comparatively small fraction of this trade is open to the reproaches of Mr. Justice Grantham. The great body is composed of men who have made a marked advance during recent years. Many of them are as good friends to temperance as those who clamour outside their ranks, and are most scrupulous to do all they can in the way of repressing excessive drinking. But this being the case, their best policy is not to defend all who belong to their class against every accusation, but as far as possible

to discourage and weed out the few whose doings are a discredit to the trade. For it cannot be denied that much crime, and especially that associated with violence, is often directly due to indulgence in alcohol. Mr. Justice Grantham says that during the last four weeks "twelve murders, eighteen attempts at murder, and woundings without number" were, as was proved by the evidence, due to drink, and he adds, "drink served by publicans, and not at clubs, and drink proved to have been served in the public-house where the man was openly drunk."

This state of affairs cannot be described as other than regrettable, and it is a pity, for their own sakes, that the publicans should have appeared to defend it. No reasonable man can deny that a certain class of mind, when inflamed with drink, turns naturally towards crime, and it is a problem worthy of most serious consideration what steps can be taken to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. During the last year stringent regulations came into force, but they do not seem to have been applied very rigorously after the first few weeks. It might be no bad plan to confiscate the licence of any publican on whose premises men convicted of crime have been, as Mr. Justice Grantham says, "openly drunk." Most of those who come up on the charges alluded to are not first offenders, but misdemeanants of long standing. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the landlord of a public-house must know the character of the customer he is serving; and, in the case of one who has been convicted of crime, particular care should be taken to see that he is not allowed to approach the borderland of intoxication. We do not say that he ought not to be served with drink at all, because any too stringent regulation of that kind would never be properly applied; but the price he ought to pay for having broken the laws of his country is that of having his drink limited. The mere fact of this being done would have the effect of causing him to remember that a short period of imprisonment or a small fine did not wipe out the offence. It would also act as a deterrent, for those who saw the effects would be chary of getting themselves into what would be practically a Black List in the second degree. Further, it is generally conceded, even by the licensed victuallers themselves, that a reduction might be effected with great advantage in the number of licences. Surely this would be most justly applied to those who showed themselves unworthy to hold the licence. In their case no question of compensation could arise. The privilege would be forfeited through their own misconduct. In this way not only would the number of licences be reduced, but the black sheep would be gradually weeded out of the trade. That would be no injury, but, on the contrary, a great benefit, to the sober and industrious majority, whose ambition is to carry on a lawful and just business in a lawful and proper manner.

Such is the moral we are inclined to draw from this controversy without taking any particular side in it. For we consider it no business of ours to pass judgment upon the issue at stake between the controversialists. Mr. Justice Grantham may have very possibly put an extra dot on the i's and an extra cross to the t's, and the publicans are protesting rather too much. Truth, as usual, possibly lies midway between them, but of one thing there can be no doubt whatever—the immoderate drinking that goes on in the lower class of public-houses is in itself a disgrace to civilisation, and indubitably leads to the commission of many crimes. It is from such haunts that the brutal husband very often goes home to beat, and in many cases murder, his wife. There, too, the drunken wife finds what makes her home miserable. Occasionally, as may be gathered from a perusal of the police-court reports, both parties spend their time there, with the result that their children are shamefully starved and neglected. From the same source it can be proved that friend is often set against friend, and the companions of years are brought to blows that frequently end in manslaughter. To put down such places is an urgent duty of the legislator. It ought to be done, in our opinion, without tyranny and without injustice, and in such a way that the honest inn-keeper will in no degree be prevented from earning the livelihood to which he is entitled. If they are wise, the licensed victuallers will look at the question from this point of view. The more they are purged of scandal the stronger will be their position against those strenuous reformers who would clear them out root and branch. If they take no care to rid themselves of the less reputable members of their fraternity, they can only blame themselves for the consequences.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of the Hon. Mrs. Charles Coventry and her children, the daughter of Mr. Fitz Hugh Whitehouse of Newport, U.S.A., and wife of the Hon. Charles Coventry, second son of the Earl of Coventry. Their country seat is Earl Croome's Court, Worcester.

NOV 18 1904



A GREEN Yule invariably claims many victims, and among those who go to make a fat kirkyard this year the names of two interesting personages stand out prominently. One is Sir William Allan, M.P., who represented Gateshead in Parliament. He was a striking figure in the House of Commons, over 6ft. in height, massive in build, with a great leonine head, and his convictions were as strong as his physique. He wanted nothing except a little more brain to have made one of the great statesmen of the day. His energy was not wholly given to politics either, as he was one of the minor poets of our time, and extremely interested in the literary movements of his age. It may be permissible for the present writer, who has had exceptional opportunities of knowing, to say that in private life Sir William Allan was a man of the greatest generosity and unselfishness, and that many a kind deed was done with his right hand of which the left, and the outside world, knew nothing.

The other personage is that of Mr. George Gissing, one of the minor novelists of the day. He has passed away in comparative youth, as he was born in 1857, and it was only in 1884 that his first book was published. We do not know that he has received quite as much attention as his literary merits entitled him to. The blackness and weariness and melancholy of life took such a hold upon his mind that he was unable to attain to the cheerful optimism which England has come to demand of her more popular writers; in fact, to read his books was to go out in search of depression, a thing to which the average English reader is greatly averse. His work was done, however, with the very greatest care, and just before his death he was engaged in close preparation of a North Country novel, concerning which he nourished the greatest hopes. The central figure was to have been a village schoolmaster, but how much he had written and worked out we are unable to say. We only hope that the book had approached completion.

NOV 18 1904
How easily people can be lost in this world is illustrated in a singular manner by the annual summary which Mr. Sidney H. Preston has drawn up of missing heirs and kindred in 1903. Many of the instances that he touches upon are quite romantic, though the mystery attending them in most cases we should consider nearly hopeless. For example, Joseph Burton, who went to the Crimea as a sailor during the Crimean War, is much more likely to be dead "than interested in the estate of his aunt." The descendants of Richard Battersbee, one would think, ought to have recognised who they were long before this, since the only particular given about him is that he married Susannah F. Sturmy in 1785. J. G. M. Tait, "if he has not passed away from earth," may hear of something to his advantage. A man called William Purchase, who left England as far back as 1848, is again advertised for, but fifty-five years is a long time out of a man's life. Another man wanted to step into a fortune is Robert A. Peirce, who has not been heard of since 1867, although his case is not quite so hopeless as that of David Kelly, who left Scotland for Australia in 1853. Among other people advertised for is George Ginman, of whom we are pathetically told that he was "last seen in Camden Town with a cart and horse," but when is not stated. The next-of-kin is wanted of Matilda Adams, who died in an infirmary in 1879; of Andrew Forbes, a purser in the Royal Navy, deceased in 1814; and of various others so long gone with the affairs of earth that it seems quite hopeless to advertise any more for them.

A deplorable accident has occurred in Cumberland. On Saturday last Alexander Goodall was one of three who attempted to climb Scafell pinnacle as a holiday amusement. They reached the top without much difficulty, though an ice axe had to be used before they got there. A deep ghyll was chosen for the descent, Goodall going first. They did not take the precaution to use a rope, and they had not gone far down, when Goodall was seen to stretch his arms and fall over the cliff. The coroner, in summing

up, commented rather severely on the folly of those who attempted those dangerous climbs, saying that there were many places of easy ascent from which equally good views could be obtained. It is not the prospect, however, that tempts the climber, but the very spice of danger that the coroner deplored. These accidents have been rather frequent of late, and it is to be hoped that they will have the effect of inducing the mountaineers to exercise more caution in future.

During the course of the Lewisham election a gentleman from New Zealand gave an interesting account of a practice there that might very well be copied in the Mother Country. He says that in the elementary schools a beginning is made in the way of teaching little mites of seven to "venerate that rag of red, white, and blue," which we hold so dear. They are not only taught to salute it, but also to know the meaning of the lines and colours. At the advanced schools every Wednesday the boys are marched in fours into the playground, in the middle of which is a tall white pole. When they are all dressed in line the top boy brings out a bundle, which he unfolds and runs up to the top of the pole. Then the scholars sing "God save the King" round the flag. Perhaps it is not too much to hope that this patriotic custom will be adopted at home.

OUTLOOK.
A storm-spent air;
A vivid star;—
No soul to share;
No dream to mar.
A casement wide;
A far, lone light;
The sounding tide,
And space, and Night.
The phantom town
Juts, black and low;
Over the Down
The wild drifts go.
A white, set lip;
Eyes fain for sleep;
And a loose life-grip—
Grim to keep!

EMILY HUGHES.

The present Government is one whose energy finds outlet in the most unexpected quarters. It has neglected such important interests as the Army, but has found time to collect elaborate reports as to the relations that exist between State and theatre in foreign countries. Here in England there has always been a small but pertinacious band of enthusiasts who from time to time advocate the establishment of a State theatre. The average citizen does not take much interest in the matter, chiefly because there is no branch of intellectual work which, during the last fifteen or twenty years, has shown such indubitable signs of degeneracy as the drama. If we take the plays running in England at the present moment, it is safe to say that there is not a single one that would attract the serious lover of the theatre. Several of them are pretty and clever, and nicely calculated to while away the evening hours of those who have been engaged in business during the day. They have, as a matter of fact, reached the level of the music hall; but we do not forget that the time was when the theatre was strong enough to engage the attention of the best minds in the country. The running of such plays as are now being brought out by State aid would simply be too ridiculous for words. The State might just as well be called upon to run the Hippodrome or the Pavilion.

When we look at the advantages that are alleged to arise from State aid to theatres in foreign countries we find them somewhat illusory. The Belgian regulations, we are told, are calculated to promote the art of acting and also the art of dramatic writing. What is the net result? It is true that Maeterlinck came from Belgium, but his plays have mostly been produced in Paris, and his most ardent admirers would scarcely claim for them that they are distinguished by dramatic art. They are merely his own dreamy self done into conversation. It would be interesting for anyone to mention the name of a Belgian dramatist who has towered so high above his contemporaries as to have a European reputation. Nor do we know of any Belgian actor or actress who has attained the eminence of one or two of the American, one or two of the English, one or two of the Italian, and one or two of the French histrions. The principle, in fact, is that of free trade applied to intellect. Protect any calling or institution by the State, and it very soon becomes inert and unenterprising. The greatest of dramatists and the greatest of actors have been developed by their individual determination to do their best. Experience seems to us to be right against the scheme of establishing and endowing State theatres.

A pretty controversy is raging just now in regard to what is called the barmaid question. On one side the puritanical

reformer would have them abolished altogether, while, on the other, the advocates of free labour, ably represented by the secretary, Miss Nora Vyner, hold that it would be an act of injustice to a class of honest and wage-earning young women. Public opinion, we think, would certainly resent any course of action that would tend to throw the 80,000 barmaids of London, or even a fraction of them, out of work. But, on the other hand, there are many reasons for holding that the sale of drink by women who are, to a certain extent, chosen for their youth and good looks, adds a meretricious attraction to a place that draws young men sufficiently without it. Nor is it possible to pretend that the girls themselves do not suffer. They must hear and see many things in such a position that can only have a degrading effect, and if a reform in this matter could be effected without injustice it would, we think, be welcomed by all sober-minded people—even by those who have not the slightest sympathy with the fanatical persons who would impose their own views on the public without the slightest attention to individual opinion and judgment.

A slight, but by no means unimportant, point in connection with Army reorganisation is dealt with in an admirable paper by Captain A. F. H. Howe. During the course of the Boer War we know that many Volunteers and Reservists had to have their services rejected on account of the badness of their teeth, and there is no doubt whatever that a serious attack of toothache is at all times a drawback to a soldier's efficiency. Especially in those moments when patient waiting is required, often in a motionless position, on the part of a scout or sentry, an aching tooth is not only a trial, but adds considerably to the nervousness of its subject. Captain Howe proposes, therefore, that a staff dental surgeon should be appointed at the War Office, and that Tommy's teeth should receive careful and consistent attention. This is one of the reforms which, unpretentious though it looks, is calculated to add very greatly to the efficiency of the Army.

A society has been formed in the Midlands which is to be known as the Midland Re-Afforesting Association. The Earl of Meath is chairman, and the object of the society is to get the waste lands, pit-tips, and "spoil banks" of the Black Country planted with trees. It has been calculated that there are about 30,000 acres of this kind lying idle, and while agricultural and garden crops cannot be grown on waste from the mines, experience has shown that certain kinds of trees will flourish there well. We can see no difficulty in carrying out so admirable a proposal. Young trees are not expensive to purchase, nor is the cost of planting a heavy one, while, unlike other crops, they go on growing without calling for elaborate cultivation. The scheme is one of conspicuous merit. No one who knows the desolation of a mining district where the mines have been worked out, will fail to acknowledge how much pleasanter it would be were the eye to rest upon growing trees and green foliage. Nature herself, if left alone, will renovate the most devastated land; but her processes are slow, and planting the trees would be a simple and good means of assisting them.

In his recently-published report the Commissioner of Uganda, Lieutenant-Colonel Hayes Sadler, makes an emphatic protest against the retention of the hippopotamus on the list of protected big game in the region under his control. According to his account the big beast is so plentiful in the branches of the Nile and the other waterways as to be a serious nuisance and danger, and so far from there being the slightest fear of its extinction, the most that a policy of vigorous destruction would be likely to effect would be its banishment from populated centres to solitary streams and marshes where it would not be able to do much harm. At present, the hippopotami not only cause immense destruction to crops in their nightly forays, but are extremely dangerous to river traffic from their habit of attacking canoes unprovoked. As a consequence, the passage of many of the ferries is an undertaking of real risk, and the "hippos" are a troublesome and serious check on means of communication. It is something to hear of a region in which any form of big game is still sufficiently numerous to be a menace to civilisation. The case certainly appears one in which some relaxation of the existing regulations seems called for to keep the balance even.

Punting and canoeing, instead of skating and sledging, seemed to be the appropriate pastimes of this singular Christmas and Yuletide. The floods that have been out with such disastrous liberality have offered a prospect of most glorious skating; but that is a prospect which cannot very well be realised without a little frost—without a good deal more frost than most of the country has experienced. From the skater's point of view these floods are a lost opportunity. Generally, we look on an open and frostless winter as the ideal of what the hunting man wants, but he will not receive you kindly if you suggest to him that this has been an ideal hunting season. The horse is not a skater—he does not want frost—but neither is he a punter nor a canoeist. He wants land, not water, for his operations; and even hock-deep

mud is not his best surface for travelling. We might have done some capital hunting on skates if the frost had only availed itself of the chance given by the floods. A remarkable point of the floods, and one that shows how the land must be soaked to saturation point, is their permanence; the length of time they have lain out, even with no help from the clouds. All their volume has to be carried off by the rivers; the land can absorb no more.

The appointment of Mr. Reginald Pocock to the post of Superintendent of the Gardens of the Zoological Society augurs well for the gardens. For eighteen years Mr. Pocock has served on the staff of the Natural History Museum in London, and during this time he has shown himself to be a zoologist of high rank. Though his official work has kept him mainly employed in working at the collections of spiders and scorpions, Mr. Pocock has devoted the bulk of his leisure hours to the study of the larger mammalia, and his contributions to zoological literature under this head are of prime importance. Reform is to be Mr. Pocock's watchword. He desires to see the gardens not only made more attractive to the general public, but also more useful from a scientific point of view. In this latter particular, indeed, it will be his endeavour to realise the intentions of the founders of the society. A series of careful observations on the habits and peculiarities of the animals in the collections is to be kept, and these, we hope, will be duly recorded in the "Proceedings" of the society. Of late years, as a glance at the publication of the society will show, opportunities of observations of this kind have been most woefully neglected.

THE LAVENDER OF LIFE.
The world goes all too fast, my love;
I am tired of the restless race,
And my heart has gone back to the roses
In a quiet garden place—
To the moat and the mossy sundial
And the yews, where the shadows steal,
To the love at the lattice window
And the song at the spinning-wheel.
The world goes all too fast, my love,
With its dance and revel and wine;
And my heart has gone back to the holly-walk
And an oak-framed love of mine—
Gone back, gone back for a hundred years,
From a world of greed and strife,
To the harp and the broderied tapestry
And the lavender of life.

W. H. OGILVIE.

"Lions very cheap to-day," might have been the advertisement, and more true than most of its kind, at the recent auction sale of the beasts and appurtenances of Sanger's circus. It is a sad fact that this joy of our youth has ceased to exist, and there is a certain pathos in the cheap rate at which the king of beasts was sold. Twenty pounds apiece is something like a tenth of the normal value of a good lion; yet that is all that the lions fetched. Probably it is the competition of the Hippodrome that has brought Sanger's to this.

As a rule, but little idea of poetry is associated with the right of a man walking in a sack—the gait is not an elegant one—but a recent exhibition of certain men walking (or waddling) in sacks through the streets of Chepstow was, properly understood, a perfect display of poetic justice. It had been the practice for some time for the casuals coming into the ward for a night to cut up their clothes, to the end that, for the sake of decency, a new suit might be given them on their departure. The Guardians, growing rather tired of this expense on the rates, arrayed three of these sartorial iconoclasts in sacks; and thus apparelled, made them walk through the streets of Chepstow to the court, whence they were conveyed by rail, still in the sackcloth and ashes of a compulsory penitence, to the county gaol. There is poetic justice in the picture that this suggests, and it may also convey a useful hint—both for the casual before he rends his garment, and for the Guardian who sits in judgment on him for his deed.

The University athletic people can take care of themselves, and their business is nobody's except their own, but will not the fact that the Cambridge men are going to meet the London Athletic Club on March 12th take something of the interest from the Inter-University Athletic Meeting, which is to be held on March 25th? It will at least give the Oxford people a very accurate idea of what the Cambridge men can do on a neutral ground, and, so far, will take something of the unexpected out of the contest between the two Universities; and it is in the happening of the unexpected that a great deal of the interest consists. Of the making, and the breaking, of athletic records there seems to be no end. In the past season Shrubbs has made new record times for three miles, two miles, and 2,000yds. This fine runner is entered for some of the events at the Olympic games to be held in connection with the St. Louis Exhibition.

THE HERONRY AT ECURY.

TOURISTS and other travellers in Marne, near Châlons, often pass on without visiting a natural curiosity, unique in France, though common enough in England; that is to say, the heronry at Ecury-le-Grand. The Castle of Ecury is situated between Châlons-sur-Marne and Epernay, and encloses in its grounds a plantation of lofty trees growing in a marsh. The herons for several centuries have returned spring after spring to nest in the same spot, perhaps even in the same nests. Among the records of the castle there are documents dated as far back as 1380, in which mention is made of the existence of this heronry. Wholly protected from birds-nesters and other marauders, biped and quadruped, the herons thrive there in the most perfect peace and quietude. There are more than 200 nests, inhabited by a population of from 800 to 900 birds, including young and old,



AT HIS SOLITARY VIGIL.

and in certain years the number has been known to reach 1,100 birds; but that is the exception.

I remember one visit which, on a certain May morning, we paid to the heronry, thanks to the kindness of the owner, M. de Ste. Suzanne, who was always delighted to open wide the gates of his domain to those who loved the birds. About 300yds. from the house, in some magnificent ash, oak, and elm trees, many of them hundreds of years old, the keeper who accompanied us pointed out huge bundles of small branches, wedged in some places at the

intersection of several great limbs, and in others perched at the very top of the trees. These are the nests. A few of the ash trees contain as many as eight or ten, but there are more often only three or four in each tree. Of late years the nests have become much more distributed, the republic having spread itself over the whole extent of the wood, whereas formerly



THE NESTS AMONG THE TREES.

the nests were grouped closely together. Some of the herons, probably the younger birds, not allowed to come near the old nests, decided to build in the pine trees, whose flat and horizontal branches offered them every convenience. But the venture was not a happy one, for it was child's-play for the polecats to climb the natural ladder formed by these branches, which spread themselves right down to the ground. Several broods were murdered, and many eggs broken and gobbled greedily up; and the herons, having learnt by bitter experience how little security was to be found there, deserted their new abode.

In the first days of February, if the winter has been mild, one may see the heralds which precede the army of herons arriving in batches of twos and threes. Little by little the ranks thicken, and all the ponds and tiny brooks in the neighbourhood begin to harbour the returning absentees, who, after several days of rest, find mates. Then begins the work of repairing the old nests. If the one chosen seems to the parent birds strong enough to support a new brood, they content themselves with getting rid of the dead leaves which have accumulated in it during the winter. If, on the other hand, the old home threatens to break down, it is made to serve as a foundation to the new one; and this accounts for the great difference in the size, the nests attaining sometimes to the dimensions of the eyrie of the golden eagle.

As soon as the nest is completed the eggs are laid, each hen laying usually about three eggs, according to her age. These eggs are neither thick-enders nor thin-enders, in Swift's famous

the food indispensable to them. It has been said that journeys of eighty and even a hundred kilometres are nothing to them when hunger forces them to it. And that is perhaps why the herons love the park at Ecury so much. It is splendidly situated in close proximity to several great rivers—the Seine, the Marne, and the Aube—and the herons can besides explore the 300 hectares of marshes which adjoin the heronry.

About the end of the spring little by little the nests begin to empty themselves. The young birds take flight, and, accompanied at first by their parents, seek food in the neighbourhood. Soon they free themselves from all restraint, forget the bonds of relationship which bind them to their brothers and sisters, and disperse themselves all over France. It is about this time that the shore-shooter meets them, already wild in spite of their inexperience, and easy to distinguish from the older birds by their want of the crest and other ornaments which decorate their elders. For it is only about the second year that they put on their definite livery—white neck, speckled with black, and a back of an ash colour. But before then how many will fall victims to the birds of prey or the shot of the sportsmen? How many will ever return from the perilous voyage of migration and see again the hospitable wood of Ecury-le-Grand?

It is impossible not to admire these birds. They are, in spite of everything, good servants, who, in exchange for some small fry, rid us of a crowd of destructive animals. Unfortunately few sportsmen can resist having a shot at them, when they come within reach of a gun. It is a conquest without glory,



RETURNING TO THE NEST.

phrase, and in colour are of a bluish green. The period of hatching lasts for twenty-nine days, and during this time the nest is rarely left alone, the cock and hen relieving each other to attend to their food.

At the end of March the hatching is finished, and then begins a time of feverish activity for the parents. Like most large birds, the herons have favourite hours for feeding, and it is in the morning and at evening that they are more commonly seen going to and from their young. Leaving long before daybreak, they return with the dawn, their crops filled with food, and it is a curious spectacle to follow these huge waders in their slow and heavy flight, until they reach the top of their tree, and, resting there for a moment, flap their wings to recover their balance. Then, awkwardly, they descend to the edge of the nest, and the young nestlings stretch up their beaks into that of the parent bird, who disgorges to them, by turns, the food already half-digested. All this is done to an accompaniment of hoarse shrieks and discordant squawks, which can be heard from far away, and under the trees forms a deafening concert.

The food of the herons does not consist, as one might be tempted to believe, entirely of fish, but largely of tiny animals—batrachians, ophidia, and moluscs. One can easily understand that they find it much easier to catch a frog or a lizard than a small fish, which entails no small amount of time and patience. Here this is easily confirmed by observation. The castle is surrounded by ditches, where fish are plentiful, but only very seldom are the herons to be seen fishing there. Later on, during the autumn migration, when the first chills of winter cause the moluscs and ophidians to disappear, they are forced to seek for food at the edge of the water. And if one may judge from the starved condition of those killed at this season, it would appear that they are not very successful on their fishing expeditions. It is certain that, no matter how rich the neighbourhood of the heronry may be in animal food, the store would very soon be used up, and it would go very hard with the birds if their instinct and their powerful wings did not permit of their going far afield in search of

for the heron is easy to shoot, and only yields a loathsome oily roast which even dogs squirm at; but he has the misfortune to be beautiful, and to look well stuffed. For this cause does he fall a victim to the gunner.

ANDRE PHILIPON.

DREAMS.

HERE is a world whose shores are lapped by the mystic tides of sleep—the world of dreams. No boat has ever set sail across that fair smooth sea, but the shadow of great wings is over the waveless flood. Not to many is it given to take that airy path and to come to the valleys of dreamland, because in most the immortal part is small and weak, and its wings will not bear it from the ground. Such are content to taste and feel, to hear and see, with the grosser sense, the baser touch, the duller ear, the weaker sight. For them, there is no light but that of the sun and moon, no scent but that of the flowers they smell, no beauty but that of the flesh they covet, no viewless world of heart's desire. They have never entered dreamland. Perhaps long ago, as children, they may have come to the fairy sea and gazed across its wide blue waters with longing eyes, but the memory is dead and buried under the dust of the years. The soul sees with a child's pure eyes, loves with a child's pure heart. It cannot grow old with the body the body may rob it of life, but its youth it cannot take away. Who are the dreamers? They are little children, bright-eyed youths, long-haired maidens. Are there no dreams for the old and grey, the weary and world-worn? Yes, for those who have kept their lives and thoughts clean and white even as a little child's. Surely they live with dreams, dreams of the past, dreams of the future. In both they are young again, for through the gates of a dear dead past they enter the shining portals of the future.

Who is old, who is weary that dwells with dreams? The

dreamer reckons not existence by months and years, troubles not himself that the flower of youth blossoms but a few short hours on the arid plain of life, because in his heart that flower never dies, because he knows that it is from all time and for all time to be. The world of dreams is older than the sun and farther than the stars. Whence those half-awakened memories that take us in solitary places, on lonely hills, in the shadow of great woods, by still deep waters, in old grass-grown gardens? They come from the silence of some sweet voiceless past, haunting, dim, elusive. They lead us through enchanted meadows, under mysterious twilights. They whisper strange forgotten things. We have all been dwellers in Eden, have all drunk of the dew of Paradise, but it is only in a few that the remembrance lives and yearns. Is imagination the power to grasp a beauty unseen, a grace unknown, a music unheard, or is it but a memory, an imitation, an echo of a loveliness once seen of very sight, known of very truth, heard of very sound, but now faint and dark in some dim chamber of the mind? The dreamer is he from whose soul this loveliness has never wholly passed away; it haunts him, mocks him, escapes him. He spends his life in striving to give expression to the beauty that consumes him, and dies unfulfilled of his desire. His mind inhabits those outer heights where words will not live—a stainless air full of the incarnate sweetness of morning, the cloudless grace of spring, the glory of sunset spaces, the silence of stars. The rose blooms for him in no earthly garden; the moon shines on no substantial world. The nightingale sings in a fairy wood; the rivers run through enchanted valleys down to a golden sea. He rears himself a palace in aerial places with walls built of the rubies of Dawn, the opals of Even. Its roof is of Heaven's azure, and its foundations are set in space. It is borne on the wings of the wind, and its windows open on the waters of Eternity. They are redder than roses, and they lie along the shores of the Islands of the West. The dreamer loves with a child's pure heart. Else must he fall from his airy kingdom, and walk the earth with broken wings and an aching heart. If he but listen to the voice of the enchantress, to the strange woman—to desire her beauty, to crave her unbound hair between his hands, her faithless kisses on his lips—then for him the glory of the day is gone, the wonder of the darkness is dead; he walks no more with dreams; he is shut out from

Paradise. To him Love must come like the mystic breath of morning—from worlds beyond. She meets him in old grey cloisters, in the crimson shadow of sacred windows, in the silence of strange still twilights. Her garments are a rapture of holiness, and her footsteps fall in quiet places. Her kisses are blown to him on the breath of flowers, pure as the dew and fragrant as the lips of morning. Her eyes are deeper than all depth; they lead him by winding rivers through fields of asphodel on to the Gates of Heaven. Her voice comes from far away. It breathes an immemorial Past; he has heard it in his dreams. She is from the beginning of Life, and her heart is fixed for ever. He knows her for his own, and he knows that all the winds and waves of the world cannot keep her lips from his. For her paths lead on through light, and are rounded with Eternity. The dreamer knows nothing of the unrest, the passion, the weariness of Love. He has set his thoughts so high that the dust of the world cannot sully them. Love is to him a mystery of loveliness, a rose of unplucked Sweetness, a rapture not of sense but soul, an ecstasy of Spirit, a promise of Eternity. The world is not for dreamers. No. They are few who can put off the burden of riches from their hearts, the weight of clay from their feet, and take them wings of the night, and pinions of the morning, but these are they who have already entered into that inheritance which shall not be taken away from them,

"For the body dies, but the Soul lives for ever."

THE GLORY OF . . . THE DYING YEAR.

DOWN a pack-road, where the deep ruts overgrown with rank grass mark an unfrequented way, we pass on a still soft afternoon in early winter. Overhead, the oak boughs, now almost destitute of leaf, and the long straggling shoots of crimson-berried rose briars meet and twist together, wedded by tangles of traveller's joy. So thick



W. Rawlings.

MIST ON THE POLLARDS.

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are the foamy white billows of the seeding climber that only little glimpses are to be seen of a pale blue sky. The intense orange, bronze, and purple tints of the dying foliage are intensified by the humid atmosphere of the ditch, for it is little more, and soon it will be impassable, for if once the snow falls, and the winter gale drifts it up the gully, here it will remain until it melts in the spring sun, and flows in a little self-created brook a-down the valley. In the shelter of the banks a few wild flowers still blossom, and if you push back the damp sweet leaves you will perchance find a primrose foolish enough to forestall the spring. The hedges are full of bird life, for the food they love is there, and at our approach a flight of field-fares, but newly come, arise from their hedge covert, and pass into the neighbouring field. The older inhabitants remain concealed in their dense fortress, and their contented twitterings fill the still air. Now and again a robin's song marks the uncertain chorus with measured, tuneful note, and a young blackbird with heart full of love's foretellings whistles a short prelude to the spring symphony that has yet to be composed. From the twilight of the pack-road we ascend a slope of short emerald turf, and on and on over a great common, where all

conifers from distant lands stand side by side; the Turkish oak and our own historic tree mingle their acorns. At the wood edge grow great elms and graceful ruby-stemmed dogwood and hollies, the "Holme" and "Hulfere" of Chaucer, and of which Evelyn speaks "as beautiful at any time in the year, glittering with its armed and varnished leaves, the taller standards blushing with their natural coral." And the trees stand knee-deep in bracken, in Berkshire called fern, purple, orange-yellow, and where the fern-cutters have been merciless are viridian green patches of turf soft as velvet. It is so warm that we rest on the trunk of a great fir that has been felled, and we can see that the wood-cutter's axe has been recently at work, for all around us the scented chips lie thickly among the brown of the fallen leaves. With a gentle patter, as of fairy footsteps, the acorns, loosened by a little breeze from their cups, pass to the ground, then, with a louder sound, a great fir cone falls at our feet, sweet and resinous; we lift it up and inhale its fragrance with delight, and pull the little winged seeds from their protecting sheaths, marvelling at Nature's wonderful precision. The silence that else would be felt is again broken by the busy birds, who talk incessantly, flashing from bough to bough. The nut-



R. W. Robinson.

THE FIRST FALL OF SNOW.

Copyright

around us as far as eye can see is a veritable feast of colour: Hills of gorse, whose tender, harmonious green is vivified by the intersecting fronds of sunburnt bracken; here and there a bush is still clothed in brilliant yellow, and the peculiar scent of the blossom, as it is distilled in the moist air, mingles with the perfume of what Shakespeare calls "the herbs and simples" that grow on common land.

Though the rolling billows of gorse stretch for miles, till a low, pearl-tinted horizon, faintly streaked with the rays of a descending sun, ends the lovely view, there is no monotony; for the battalions of tall Scotch firs, with ruddy stem and indigo-green boughs, accentuate the purpling distance, and the white graceful limbs of the birches are finely engraved against the darker lingering foliage of the oak and elm where stands the wood.

Then we climb a well-worn stile, on whose bent posts generations of village sweethearts have cut their names, and so into the wood. How limitless it seems in the half light, for here no vista ends, and no path leads straight to a goal! It is almost a forest, for here are great trees of countless years' growth, and strangely mixed varieties. The Scotch fir and rare

hatch is working as hard as though he had a wife and children to support in the deserted hole, and a rustling in the leaf-bed close at hand betrays the near presence of some four-footed creature, and we stir neither hand nor foot. Presently we see the waving head and malign eyes of a stoat, who, in his new winter coat, is on the track of an innocent, unhappy rabbit; but we spoil his sport, and he disappears with a snake-like action into the bank. The wood-pigeons are in the newly-ploughed field a little way off, and there, too, are the rooks, looking gigantic in the waning light as they waddle down the furrows in their newest dress of glossy black, freeing the farmer from wire-worm and the countless insect pests that will work such havoc on his future crops. To the lovers of country life these early winter scenes are full of a charm that does not exist in the less varied summer-time. The colour is incomparable, and quite impossible to reproduce. The distance is a deep rich blue, softened into infinitude by the damp haze of the atmosphere, and in the foreground the delicate brilliance of the endless shades of green is unapproachable. No brush could give the gradations of form. No colour-box would produce the half tones, so exquisitely are they harmonised. The stems of the bare oak

Jan. 2nd, 1904.]

COUNTRY LIFE.

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UNDER THE WILLOWS;

A. Horsley Hinton.

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branches against the tender sky as the light fades, are like velvet in their swartness. Golden leaves catch each pale beam, until they seem to glow with heavenly fire, for a glory is everywhere in the passing of the year into death and decay that cannot be told by pen or pencil.

AUGUSTA DE LACY · LACY.

ON THE GREEN.

AS golfers we seem to be in a continual state of paying compliments, and of paying them gladly, to the great American nation. For ages, before America awoke to golf, we used American hickory for the shafts of clubs, and, less often, various American woods for the heads. Now that America no longer neglects the great opportunity, we pay her the compliment, with gratitude, of using the Haskell ball, which she has sent us; and quite recently, since the return

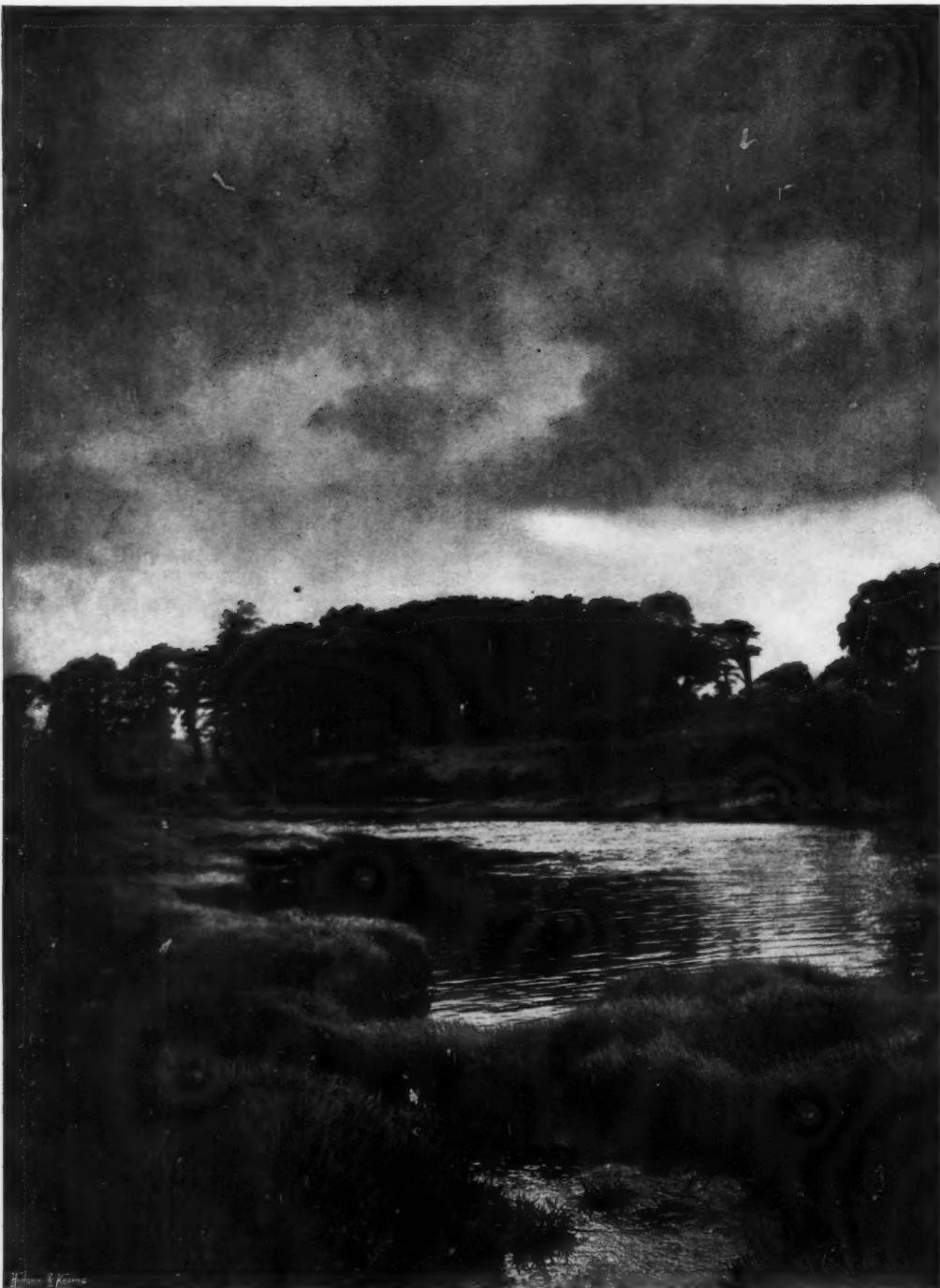
and the results of her tour go to show that the American man golfer is better, comparatively speaking, than the American woman golfer. Miss Adair had a bigger advantage on the whole over her competitors in the States than the University people had over their opponents. Of course it may be argued that while Miss Adair was just about the very best of the women golfers that we could send out, it hardly could be said that our visiting men golfers were the very best. This, however, is a delicate and risky line of argument that does not make for popularity. Let us leave it without elaboration.

The latest competitor of the Haskell ball that I have seen and tried is likely to be the most powerful, in my humble judgment, always supposing—and the supposition is large—that it keeps up to sample form. This is the "Elastine" ball of the Improved Golf Ball Company. Of some of the many inventions in balls with india-rubber insides, one has had to put strain on one's conscience to speak in terms of civility. But the Elastine balls that I have tried do not want compliments. They are rather smaller and rather heavier than a Haskell. Are they as good? I am not at all sure they are not. And this is a great deal to say. It is a little more than is to be said for any other of the Haskell's rivals, I think. Some of the "Wizards" were very good, but some of them broke. So, too, do some of the Haskells; but then the Haskell people give us new balls for cracked, so we need not grumble at that. There is a big trade in "Kempshall Arlingtons." They are very good balls, more durable than the Haskell; and it is to this that they owe their favour. But the transcendent merit of the Elastine ball is not yet named—it costs only a shilling! And yet it is very nearly, if not quite (perhaps quite), as good as a Haskell. I still think that if I were to play for my life—speaking of that as a thing of value, to me, at least—I should play with a Haskell; and I shall continue to play with a Haskell while I can afford it, for golf is a game worth paying for—so much as it costs. We pay great sums for shooting and get no grouse, for fishing and get no salmon; but the golf ball is always there to be hit, if we can hit it. We get, at all events, what we pay for. So, for the present, I use the Haskell. But so soon as the inevitable happens, and my trustees and solicitors bolt with my securities—then it will be an Elastine, as far as I can see for the moment.

A caustic Sassenach said once that the Scotch knew just enough about golf to put their clubs away in the summer; and I remember the time when one of them said the month of June was an absurd month in which to hold the Amateur Championship at Sandwich—it would be so hot that he would not play, and so on. But he did play, and he beat me in that competition; and not only did we not suffer from heat, but it was as cold as charity, or Christmas—a very great deal colder than the Christmas just past—the fearful kind of weather that the Scotsman describes as "smell." The Scotch golfer, however, advances in evolution and culture, and this time it is from the North that the suggestion comes for postponing the date of the chief golfing fixtures of 1904 a fortnight later than was proposed by the authorities at Sandwich, where almost all the golf of importance seems to be about to take place. So the latest programme is for the St. George's Cup to be played for on May 27th, the International Match on the 28th, and the Amateur Championship to begin either on the 30th or the 31st, according to the numbers of the competitors. In any case, the final will be played on June 3rd, and on the following day the Professionals' International Match will be contested. Then comes the Open Championship on June 8th and

9th, with a meeting of the Professional Golfers' Association, at Deal, between the 3rd and the 8th; so that altogether there will be such an exhibition of golf in this east corner of Kent as never was seen even in the East Neuk of Fife itself. One of the best points about this programme is that the Amateurs' International Match has been shifted back to its original date relative to the championship—that is to say, that it is to be played previously to the championship. Last year it was tried after the championship, and the experiment did not give satisfaction, people not caring to stay on after for the mild excitement of the International Match.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.



A. Horsley Hinton. THE DYING YEAR: A TWILIGHT SCENE.

Copyright

of the University pilgrims from the States, there is a tendency to the use of some of the cant golfing terms that American ingenuity has invented. Thus, I was startled lately to be told by one of these, lately returned, "You are away." I was not "away" in the ordinary sense of the word. On the contrary, I was, very obviously, present. So then I made enquiry, and was told that it was merely the American way of saying that I was the farther from the hole, and therefore it was my turn to play. The term is expressive enough, when you understand it, but it seems to require a little explanation.

Miss Rhona Adair has returned from her solitary pilgrimage in the States,

WILDFOWL AT SHADWELL COURT.

SOME fifty years ago a then owner of Shadwell Court, now the country seat of Mr. J. Musker, had the happy idea of forming a lake on that part of his property which adjoined the river Thet, the stream which gives its name to the ancient town of Thetford. There are meadows with numerous "cuts" and side streams in them on the other side of the river, and wonderful beds of feather-topped reeds. In this part of the county, though not actually close to Shadwell Court, are many of the typical "meres" of Norfolk. Those at Merton, Lord Walsingham's estate, are the most famous. But there are many others, all carefully-preserved and famous haunts of wildfowl, on which many species formerly rare are greatly on the increase. This is especially the case on the lonely meres scattered about Merton and Wretham heaths, such as Stanford Mere, Tomston Mere, and the Wretham Pools. At Scoulton Mere there is one of the most famous "gulleries" of Norfolk. These Norfolk lakes and meres are quite different to the Broads, and most of them are also in another part of the county than "Broadland." The meres are, as a rule, shallow pools, with quantities of reeds, sedge, and tussock grass round them, which make admirable nesting-places for all kinds of wildfowl. Most of these pools have for many years been slowly drying up, leaving an ever-increasing fringe of rough cover round their margins. But the great rains of the present season have filled them again, and probably stored them and the spongy ground round them with water enough to last for ten years and more at high level.

Generally speaking, the Norfolk meres are the breeding ground of the various wild ducks. The lakes, on the other hand, are their chief winter refuge and assembling place, except where the meres are kept very quiet indeed. Wild duck feel safer on a lake than on shallow water, and if it is kept as a sanctuary, become almost as tame as domestic birds. Some idea of the way in which Norfolk fowl will breed round the meres may be gathered from the lists of species which nest there given by Mr. Southwell, Mr. Norgate, and the late Mr. C. Stevenson. Among them are pochards, shovellers, teal, mallard, tufted duck, gadwall, great crested grebe, black-headed gulls, swans, snipe, and redshank. In the winter the number of species is greatly increased by birds



W. A. Rouch.

WILD SWAN AND YOUNG.

Copyright

from the North. Few parts of Norfolk are remote from the sea. The lake at Shadwell Court, for instance, is not more than thirty miles from the coast. Consequently, the sea-loving species occasionally visit most of the lakes and meres, and other foreigners drop in either for a time or to stop, such as goosanders and divers. The following extraordinary bag was made at Stanford Mere in one day by Lord Walsingham, on the last day of the year 1889, to his own gun. Besides

fifteen head of ordinary winged and ground game, there were shot:

1 Woodcock	4 Pochards	2 Herons
1 Snipe	1 Golden Eye	63 Coots
2 Jack Snipe	7 Teal	2 Moorhens
23 Wild Ducks	3 Swans	1 Otter
6 Gadwalls	1 Wool-pigeon	1 Pike

1 Various (a very large rat).

There were also seen during the day pintails, tufted duck, widgeon, shovellers, sand-grouse, water-rails, gulls, and kingfishers.

In 1815, one George Turner, who played an unenviable part in exterminating the last of the bustards, which he managed partly by pushing a wheelbarrow in front of him with a screen of fir boughs, and partly by arranging "trap-guns" pulled by a string, and bearing on a baited train, is said to have killed 130 ducks on the great mere at Wretham by one discharge of his big gun. The Norfolk lakes are all artificially made, as ornaments to the large country houses. That at Holkham, for instance, was made by the first Earl of Leicester about the end of the eighteenth century. At Kimberley is another rather well-known Norfolk lake. That at Narford (Mr. Fountaine's) is famous because the gadwall ducks were first re-established there by the Rev. John Fountaine some forty years ago. The fine lake at Shadwell Court looks so like a natural piece of water that it is difficult to realise that it is not so. It was made on a plan rather different from that usually adopted by lake constructors. As a rule, the engineer selects a point on the course of some very insignificant stream and throws a dam across the valley, with a small outlet. The splendid lake at



W. A. Rouch.

SHADWELL COURT FROM THE LAKE.

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Gosfield Hall, in Essex, for example, which was made on this system possibly two centuries ago, looks exactly like a natural mere. But, as a rule, the interference of man is pretty obvious. Not so at Shadwell. The lake occupies what was an old bed of the river Thet, which was either provided with a new channel, or, as is much more likely, had already made one when the owner decided to turn the part nearest to his house into a lake. The water now covers thirty-five acres. There are many thickly-wooded islands on it, and at the sides deep beds of tall reeds in places. The banks are also beautifully wooded in parts with fine mixed trees of all kinds, including old Scotch firs, which always have a peculiarly fine appearance on a lakeside. One of the photographs shows a large tree of this species partly blown down, and hanging over the water between lake and sky. Some attention has been paid to getting up the head of wildfowl there, and there is every chance that these will much increase. For one year wild duck were artificially bred there, and these birds attracted others. Many teal breed



W. A. Rouch.

A BROOD OF SWANS DISTURBED.

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in a practically wild state by the river, as they do elsewhere in Norfolk, and are allowed to go unpinioned. It is much



W. A. Rouch.

FLYING DOWN TO THE WATER.

Copyright

there, and also snipe, which abound in the wet meadows lying on the opposite side of the river Thet. Swans nest

to be desired that the Thames swans could be left unmaimed in the same way.

This part of Norfolk is "the home of the bird" in the best sense. For centuries it has been the haunt of the large species, which always retain their ground with greater difficulty than do the small ones. Few properties have greater "natural commodities" for their encouragement than Shadwell Court. There are some 12,000 acres of land and water, of every sort and description, from the meadows by the river to the vast heaths of Roudham, once the home of the bustard, and still the breeding ground of the Norfolk plover. There are whole tracts where the ground is covered with six-foot bracken fern. Besides the heath and the arable there are large areas of wood, including a portion of the original East Anglian forest, of oaks, thicket, and ancient firs. A small fragment of this primeval forest also exists, it may be mentioned, on the portion of Lord Rendlesham's property in Suffolk near to the ruins of Butley Priory.

On such ground there is something to attract almost every class of bird, and the list of the rarer kinds seen there is a long one, even for Norfolk. Many



W. A. Rouch.

WILD DUCK ON SECLUDED WATER

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of these birds are preserved in a collection made by the previous owners, and still kept *in situ* in the hall. Eagles constantly visit Norfolk. Wild geese, of both the gray lag and brent species, the garganey duck, with the teal, tufted duck, widgeon, the red-throated diver, Sclavonian grebe, smew, bittern, night heron, and little egret, are among the birds seen on the lake. It is interesting to note that the bearded tit did, or possibly does, inhabit the reed-beds. Of owls a great variety have been seen, including, besides the two common species, the short-eared owl, Scop's eared owl, and the long-eared owl. Of the sandpipers and plovers, the green sandpiper, common sandpiper, Norfolk plover, dotterel, and ringed dotterel, have been shot there, as well as common species, like the golden and green plover, in numbers. Ospreys and a gerkfalcon are among the rare *raptores* killed there, as well as the merlin, and the orange-legged hobby. Among smaller birds the Bohemian waxwing, crossbill, and that very rare visitor the woodchat shrike should be mentioned. This last bird is a common example of the capricious nature of bird distribution. It is quite common on the other side of the Channel. Its cousin, the red-backed shrike (also a migrant), is as common here; but the woodchat shrike scarcely ever crosses the narrow dividing sea. A little auk was among the storm-driven birds which have been shot by the lake. The ruff and reeve have also been shot there.

Probably at no time for the last century have the prospects of preserving wild-fowl for sport, and at the same time of protecting and encouraging the nesting of rare birds other than those interesting from the shooting point of view, been so bright as at present. The rise in the numbers of most, and the return to their old breeding haunts of many, is particularly noticeable in the county of Norfolk.

IN THE GARDEN.

THE BLUE WATER-LILIES.

IN many parts of the country, Cornwall and Devonshire in particular, it is possible to grow the blue Water-lilies out of doors without artificial heat. This is not the case in the colder climates, where the tanks must be warmed, as at Gunnersbury House, Acton; but whether the situation is



W. A. Ronch. SHADWELL COURT: THE HAUNT OF THE WILDFOWL. Copyright

favourable or otherwise, the growth of this beautiful race is not very difficult, and, through our notes from time to time relating to them, many have taken up their culture with keen interest. An excellent paper was read last spring by Mr. Hudson, the head-gardener to Mr. Leopold de Rothschild at Gunnersbury House, and in it the importance of the flowers for cutting is alluded to, and also the best varieties. This paper is reproduced in the recently-published quarterly volume of the Royal Horticultural Society, and those who have not read it may be glad of the following notes:

Blue Water-lilies for Cutting.—The best variety to use in this way is *Nymphaea gigantea*, because its flowers will remain open longer in the day; these will last good in a cut state for three or four days. The others are all disappointing in this respect, being addicted to closing prematurely when cut, i.e., when cut as fully-expanded flowers in the sunshine. They are, however, more satisfactory when cut quite early in the morning, before they expand to any perceptible degree. When so cut the flowers should be placed in the dark, a cool cellar being a good place. Then, if wanted, say, at the time



W. A. Ronch.

DUCKS COMING OVER.

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of a garden party, from three to seven or eight in the evening, the flowers will remain expanded in most reliable fashion. One method is to fill a tub with water, where it is to stand, and place some soil in it, so that the flowers can thereby be supported. Then the surface is covered with Water-lily leaves and the flowers inserted. Arranged in this way they have a very pretty effect. It is not advisable to break the backs of the sepals in order to try to retain the flowers expanded for a longer time.

The Best Blue Water-lilies.—Mr. Hudson considers the following four in every way excellent: *N. stellata* (Berlin variety).—This beautiful and free-flowering variety was first obtained by Mr. Hudson from the well-known curator of the Glasnevin Botanic Garden, Mr. F. W. Moore. It was first noted and secured in Berlin by Mr. Watson, curator of the Royal Gardens, Kew—hence the varietal name. At Gunnersbury it is the most vigorous of any. Each crown will produce hundreds of flowers in the season, and upon the best plants nine to twelve flowers have repeatedly expanded at one time. These stand up well above the water, scarcely ever less than 12 in., and often as much as 16 in., clear of the surface. It is of a pale blue colour, with golden anthers. The blue in this Lily is not at all unlike that found in the Neapolitan Violet; its fragrance is most marked, and is distinctly not that of the Violet. The reverse of the sepals is pale green. The stems of the flowers are short, and support the flowers readily. This *Nymphaea* is the first to flower at Gunnersbury, and it is also open with the latest. *N. gigantea* is an Australian species, and quite distinct from any other in every respect. Each flower has a larger number of petals than the preceding variety. In colour it is of a deeper shade of blue. In form the flowers are more incurved, whilst they are also larger. Many of its blooms measure 7 in. to 9 in. in diameter. Another of its marked characteristics is the breadth of the petals, these being wider than in any other *Nymphaea* grown by Mr. Hudson, being, at the same time, more obtuse in shape. One most striking feature of this *Nymphaea* is its multiplicity of golden anthers and pollen masses. Its season of flowering is not so prolonged as in the preceding instance, and its flowers are not supported upon such stout foot-stalks, but partake more of a prostrate character, being usually about 6 in. or so clear of the water. Mr. Hudson has raised a very handsome form of *N. gigantea* called Hudsoni. It is a true *gigantea*, but of finer proportions and a more robust growth. The flowers are larger, often measuring 10 in. in diameter; the petals are broader and more massive, whilst the stems are very much stouter, so much so, that the flowers are erect as compared with the type. The colour, too, is of deeper blue. *N. pulcherrima* is probably a hybrid of American origin. Its flowers are of distinctly darker colour than in the Berlin form, and possess the same fragrance, but not in so marked a degree. The pedicels, or foot-stalks, are stout, but on the whole not so long; on an average the flowers do not stand more than a foot above the water. The reverse of the sepals and of the foot-stalks, too, have dark lines upon them, making it quite distinct in that

respect from the Berlin variety. Mr. Hudson, by reason of its robust growth and excellent constitution, considers this Water-lily to be the best, without exception, for outdoor cultivation in the summer in warm positions, or where the overflow water from the warm tanks can reach it. It is a most desirable *Nymphaea* to grow. *N. William Stone*.—Like the preceding, this is an American hybrid, with affinity to *N. pulcherrima*. The flowers are of a darker shade, being suffused with purple, whilst the colouring of the anthers is more marked, and of a dark tint—golden yellow. It is quite as free-flowering, and possibly more sweet-scented. As grown at Gunnersbury it is extremely vigorous.

It is important to know that the much-praised *N. zanzibarensis* has not proved so satisfactory as the others named; it wants more heat. The flowers, though sparingly produced, are of a beautiful blue colour.

RANDOM NOTES.

An Appeal for the New Horticultural Hall.—We have received the following appeal from Baron Sir Henry Schröder, Bart., for raising the £17,000 still remaining for the completion of the new hall of the Royal Horticultural Society, now being erected in Vincent Square. No one has taken greater interest in the new hall than Baron Schröder; his contribution to the fund was £5,000, and as the Fellows clamoured for this building, we hope those who have not contributed will do so, even if only to the extent of a yearly

a welcome and seasonable decoration. Christmas Roses, according to the variety, will bloom from autumn until spring, but we do not want them when the Crocuses are golden with colour and the first venturesome buds are opening on tree and shrub. We want them now, and they may be had quite unsullied by a simple protection, such as is given by a handlight placed over the crowns of the plants when the buds are developing. There is in the garden of the writer a shady, but not entirely sunless, corner where the soil is rich, and it is in this place that the Christmas Rose flourishes, and the varieties are altifolius, also called maximus, and major, which flowers with exceptional freedom. The position of the plants is north, and protection is given by handlights. A well-known grower of Christmas Roses writes about their culture in pots: "If the plants are grown in large clumps or in square patches, it is well to place one-light frames or handlights over them as soon as they begin to make new growth, in order to help the flowering, and the same practice may be resorted to for early blooms. These plants also lend themselves readily to pot culture, and should be potted up early in autumn, using pots in proportion to the size of the plants. They should never be over-potted; the soil should be good, rich loam, with a mixture of road-grit to keep it open. Plunge the pots in frames to their rims in coal-ashes or cocoanut fibre; this will keep the soil moist and prevent unnecessary watering. The plants may be brought into gentle heat and forwarded as required, but they should never be given very much heat. After the flowering



Charles Job.

GOING HOMEWARD.

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subscription. The letter is as follows, and is addressed from 145, Leadenhall Street, London:

"The new hall of the society—so anxiously desired by the Fellows—is now in course of erection, and will, the council hope, be completed for use by midsummer next. The total cost of the hall, offices, library, etc., including furniture, will be about £40,000, and the council, of which I am a member, are most anxious to open the building free of debt. Towards this sum £23,000 has been contributed, of which no less than £8,471 has been given by the council and officers of the society. There thus remains a balance of £17,000 still to be raised. At present only about one in ten of the Fellows has contributed to the building fund. In the hope that the others will see their way to do so I have been asked to make this appeal. If every Fellow would kindly forward a contribution—some giving more and some less—the desired object would be attained, and the anxiety of the council on this point at an end. I annex a list of the amounts already contributed, and, being personally so greatly interested in the completion of the building, I earnestly trust you will respond as liberally as you can to my appeal.—J. H. W. SCHRODER."

The secretary to the appeal committee, of which Baron Schröder is the chairman, is Mr. G. J. Ingram, 117, Victoria Street, London, to whom also subscriptions may be sent.

The Christmas Rose.—This is the flower of the season. Its pearly petals have a certain waxiness, which means that, unlike more fragile things, they last longer when gathered, and a bowlful of them on the table at this time is

season is over plunge the pots again up to the rim in a shady border, and during the growing season give them copious supplies of weak liquid manure. I have often seen these plants, when grown in pots, with all their leaves cut away, and, in reply to the question why this was done, was told the best way was to throw all the strength into the flowers. A greater mistake than this cannot be made, for at the time of flowering the plant requires all the help it can get, and as the leaves are the lungs of the plant, it is no wonder that after this barbarous treatment we often hear of Hellebores doing badly."

An Autumn Rose Show.—It will give pleasure to many to hear that the National Rose Society has determined to hold an autumn exhibition. This will take place in September next, and probably in the new hall of the Royal Horticultural Society. This will bring a new interest to this famous association of Rose-growers, and show to those to whom the Rose in autumn is a hidden beauty that flowers as beautiful as those of July, and more so, are possible in the sunny days of September, when the colours are seen to have a special richness, and the petals a firmness that does not come with the withering heat of summer. Caroline Testout, G. Nabonnand, the lovely Marie van Houtte, Anna Olivier, Edith Gifford, Maman Cochet and its white sport, Viscountess Folkestone, Souv. de Catherine Guillot, Mine Chelane Guinoiseau, and the crimson Princesse de Sagan are Roses to plant now and revel in next year, when from June till the frosts they will give of their flower treasures to the Rose-grower who treats them well.

A Neglected Rose.—A nice correspondent to the *Garden*, writing in the

issue of November 28th, 1903, page 377, draws attention to a Rose which we have not seen in English gardens—namely, Mme. Ernest Calvat. The correspondent writes: “I wonder why that splendid Rose, Mme. Ernest Calvat, has not made its appearance in England. I saw it the other day in the greatest luxuriance and beauty in a moist and sheltered garden. Its clear, lemon-cream flowers, perfectly uniform throughout in tone and tint, struck me as most beautiful and distinct. Curiously enough, I see its colour described as pink in the only catalogue where I have found its name, but certainly as

grown here there is no shade of anything but lemon and cream in the flowers I have seen. Its foliage is persistent and nearly as glossy as sinica Anemone, a Rose which has now established itself firmly in the affection of all gardeners here. Whether it will prove too vigorous a grower and shy in flower when grown in the North I cannot say, but I know I should try how it behaved and wait a year or two till it had covered a good space if need be, just as Mme. Bérard and Duchesse d'Auerstadt need waiting for, but in the end repay the delay.”

The PYTCHELEY HOUNDS & HUNTSMAN.

THE Pytchley hounds and huntsman are probably known to a very large number of people by sight, and to a still larger number by reputation. Everyone has heard of the Pytchley. No hunting man who has the leisure and opportunity feels that his education is quite complete unless he has seen them in the field. It is a most delightful country to hunt over, and there is a very fine pack in the kennel, but, unfortunately, it is not a country which is every-

where suited to a crowd. The beautiful country set apart for Wednesday hunting is for many reasons not one that gives space to a multitude. Nowhere do men get in one another's way so much, or the tail of the hunt do so much damage. Unfortunately, too, the Pytchley country is all more or less hunting and riding ground of the best, and, what is more to the point, so far as popularity is concerned, is accessible from one or other of the centres where men congregate for hunting. The railways, besides their unwelcome presence in some of the choicest country of the Hunt, are very convenient for bringing men and horses to the various fixtures. Nor does a “cap” have much effect on the majority of those who, having planted themselves and their horses in the Midlands at a considerable expense, are determined to see as much hunting as possible.

The Pytchley fixture on Wednesday is practically the only one that is possible to a large number of people. If they want to come they come, and, if it must be so, put their two guineas into their pockets. Thus the Pytchley is sure to have a crowd. If we look at the country from the huntsman's point of view, who has to consider not only the sport



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OUT AT EXERCISE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of his field, but his hounds, we shall see that the Pytchley is a particularly convenient one. There are a sufficiency of fair-sized coverts situated round the borders of the Hunt, such as Althorp, Shottesbrooke, Scotland Wood, and the neutral Marston coverts. These hold and breed stout foxes. The Master of the Pytchley has the inestimable right to make his pack in the autumn in the great woodlands of the Duke of Buccleuch.

Yet these are not near enough to spoil sport. During the winter the Woodland country is hunted regularly, and thus foxes are hindered from collecting in what would otherwise be a peaceful refuge. When the late Lord Hopetoun was Master, he first gave an extra day a week all through the season to the Woodlands, and partly to this step may be attributed the sport he showed. It was one disadvantage in the old days—generally golden ones otherwise—that the hounds were usually the property of the Master, and thus when the Masters changed, and they often did change in the Pytchley country, the packs were dispersed. Twice, at least, in its history the country has been hunted by a scratch pack. Now, however, the hounds are the property of the country, and the late Master of the Pytchley, Mr. Wroughton—who now hunts the Woodland pack—and John Isaacs, his huntsman, built up a pack of hounds not only brilliant in the field, but so notable on the flags, that they have repeatedly won Peterborough honours of late years.

A Pytchley hound should be fast, for it must not be in the way of a thrusting field. The country is undulating, and has, as we have seen, a fair proportion of woodland. Therefore hounds



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Copyright ISAACS AND SOME OF THE LADY PACK. "COUNTRY LIFE."

need music to tell of their whereabouts. Then it often happens that the best of the day comes in the afternoon, when hounds have already done much hard work. Therefore they need to be stout. If I were to judge a pack merely by the eye, I should say that the modern Pytchley type of hound, beautiful in many ways, was a shade too long. Of course, we all know that length and liberty are necessary to speed; but hounds that are the least slack in the loins tire very much towards the end of a long day. Yet it must be acknowledged that no pack of hounds so often rewards you for faithful patience as the Pytchley. Nor could the keenest critic discover any slackness in them. At the end of the day, for twenty minutes or so, these hounds will race a fox to death on an evening scent.

Foxes are, from the nature of the scent, generally hunted to death in Northamptonshire, and the hounds that hunt the fastest kill most. It always seems to me that the Pytchley are really hunting for the greater part of every run they have. Then their courage and drive are very notable; I draw particular attention to the charming picture of the morning scamper, showing the bold and dashing way these hounds fling themselves over an obstacle, and I have seen them do the very same when striving for the scent at the boundary fence of a covert. The illustrations to this article are especially happy in groups. There are four

couple of bitches which are typical of the character aimed at by Mr. Wroughton and John Isaacs. They have great bone, as may be seen, and are even in colour and character; in fact, they might be a bevy of sisters. Such a choice lot of bitches suggests the splendid material there is for the future of the pack. If we take note of the dog hounds, of which there are three couple in the picture, we see the same uniformity of character. The Pytchley hounds as I remember them first were a killing pack, but uneven and without any special type. This cannot be said now. In the picture of the huntsman and pack we see man, horse, and hounds well depicted, and can form some idea of the pace at which they lead their followers across a country. The Pytchley huntsman, John Isaacs, is an exception to the rule that a man seldom makes a first-rate huntsman in a grass country unless he has served an apprenticeship over plough and in woodland. The huntsman of the Pytchley has never been with any other pack, beginning as second whipper-in under Will Goodall, with his own brother Charles, now huntsman to



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Mr. Fernie, as first; when these three came together it was good for sport, but bad for foxes. Of late years Isaacs has had the pleasure of leading several Peterborough winners into the ring, and in 1896 the two brothers each had a first prize—John for the best unentered hound, Marksman, a hound that has won other Peterborough honours since, and Charles for the best stallion hound, Mr. Fernie's Ringwood. But the great winner of cups for the Brixworth kennels was Marquis, a beautiful hound, yet quite long enough for perfect symmetry. As we look at the hounds and then at The Sinner, the good hunter John Isaacs is riding, we understand the necessity for such a class of horse for the huntsman if he is to be with such a pack in such a country. In the favoured shires a huntsman must keep touch with his pack. There is no time to be lost; nay, it is not even possible to leave the hounds as much time to make their own cast as we might think orthodox elsewhere. Three hundred steaming horses soon obliterate every trace of scent. Thus when strangers admire the class of horse which Lord Annaly



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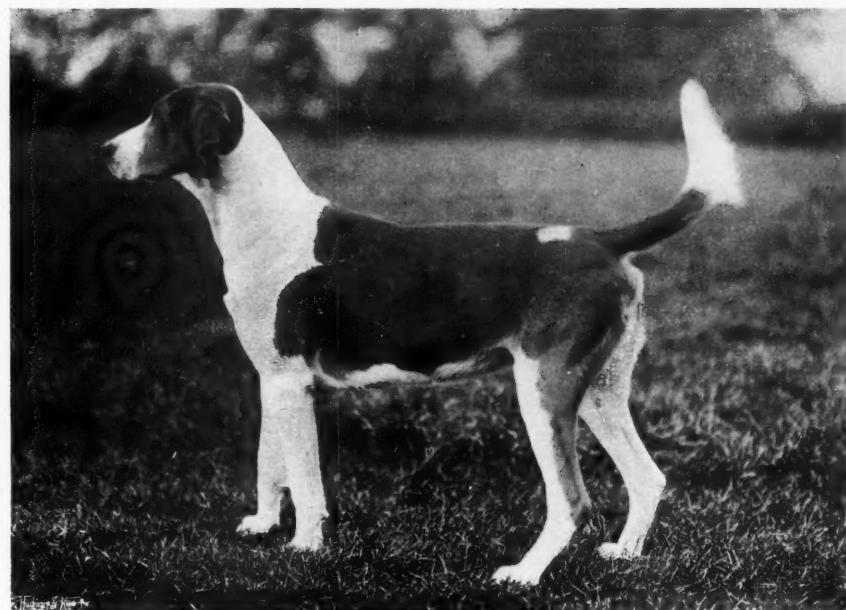
provides for his men, they may, perhaps, reflect not unprofitably on the cost of an establishment like the Pytchley. When inclined to murmur at the subscription asked, it may be well to remember that the best of hunting is not to be had for a little money.

X.

IN A SURREY VILLAGE.

CLUSTERING red gabled houses, an occasional glimpse of thatched roofs, a straight stretch of sandy road, and bright little flower gardens—these make up a pleasing picture in the golden sunlight of the rose month, a picture of which the warm tints are the chief characteristics: Blue sky, cheerful red-brick timbered houses, with the upper storeys overhanging, latticed windows opening wide, red stone tiles softened by the “all weathers” of many years to subdued tints, and a background of green hills all round, covered with the dark scented pines. The one “street,” with its cobbed side-walk, widens where four roads meet, and here stands the quaint old inn, with its heavy timberings painted an intense black, contrasting picturesquely with the whitewashed front. The painted sign, “The Burnly Arms,” is affixed to a white post opposite the porch, and swings and creaks in the breeze. Near by is the shop, the pride of the village, where surely the most exacting person can buy everything he can possibly require—from a button to a home-cured ham! A little farther on the road leads to the open common, where the cottages are only dotted here and there; the large-duck pond is the most prominent feature, so apparently essential in every Surrey hamlet. Its placid surface reflects the quiet repose of its surroundings. Swallows skim the water in graceful flight with every sign of enjoyment; and then, of course, there are the ducks. A white rail guards from any possibility of danger the infants of W——. Fowls, geese, even turkeys, in fact every description of our “feathered friends,” wander where they will, doubtless in mute assertion of “common” rights and privileges. The gorse bushes grow thicker passing beyond the village; the soft perfume, almost sickly, is heavy in the air. One looks with longing to the hilly country, where the wooded slopes look cool and green; the straight flat road, bordered by the common on either side, stretches away in the valley as far as the eye can reach. The view is certainly varied and beautiful; what it lacks in rugged grandeur is made up for by the presence of a certain very English quality, rather felt than seen, of pastoral peacefulness—a pervading suggestion of sleek peacefulness—perhaps the effect of so many fields of waving wheat, in bold “washes” of pale and dark green. The hills are for the most part round and smooth, crowned with the dark pines, and the more distant ones softly veiled in faint blue mist. If you explore the pine-woods you will find them full of beauty; the peculiar scent, with which the air is redolent, is refreshing, even exhilarating. Whortleberries cover the ground; the bluebells are like a sea, in every shade of shimmering blue; a soft carpet of pine-needles makes progress in the narrow paths a delight; here and there the pink mass of a tall wild cherry-tree in blossom makes an effective dash of colour. But to return to the village. The sandy, reddish road leads us back, and through to the other end, where one pauses in admiration before a rambling old cottage, walls, windows, and the whole of the thatched roof all buried in a glorious mass of montana. It is a cloud of white blossom this fair June morning, and one does not wonder that it has long been one of the sights of W——. Many of the cottages are covered with honeysuckle and roses, while the carefully-tended gardens testify both to the goodness of the warm, red soil, and to the industry of the villagers. In this part two or three pretty gabled houses belonging to “the quality” stand back from the road, with winding drives banked by richly-coloured rhododendrons rejoicing in the light sandy soil. Now the park wall begins, a red-brick structure at least 15ft. high. It is very old, and Time’s kindly touch has mellowed the original crude tints into soft, beautiful colourings. Closely-clipped ivy covers it. Further along huge gates of solid wood stand open, affording a glimpse of the fine old manor house with its red-brick, stone-mullioned front and its terraced lawns. A few minutes’ walk, and low paling, backed by a belt of noble trees, replaces the wall. Here, within a corner of the park, the tiny old church of which W—— is so justly proud nestles snugly. It is like a small room, only with walls of an extraordinary thickness and a square tower of considerable antiquity.

N. M. P.



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GODFREY.

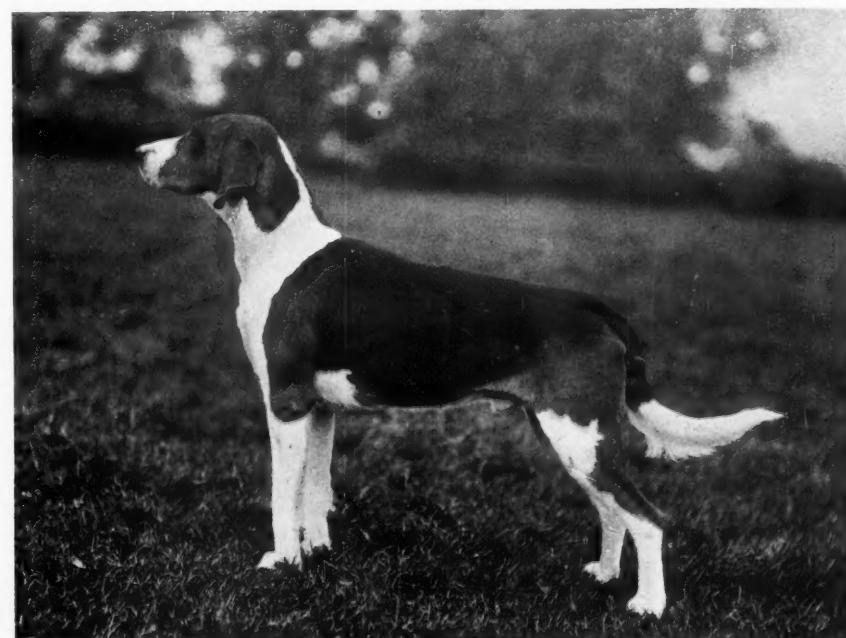
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BACK TO THE KENNEL.

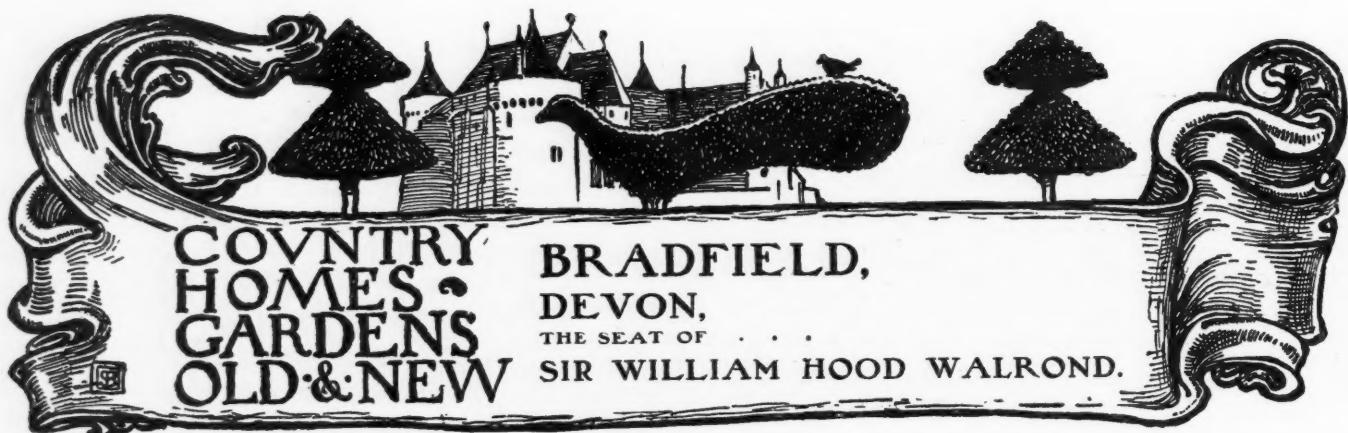
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MERRYMAN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



WE have already published many pictures of the interior of this beautiful mansion, and now we present to our readers a further selection, also taken by Mr. Latham, these depicting the exterior of the house and the splendour of its gardens. A great deal of the charm of the place is due to the beauty of the situation; but, without the care of the late Sir John Walrond, the ancient structure might never have taken upon itself its present noble aspect, nor ever have been so suitably adorned without as it is by the delightful gardens which he was largely instrumental in planning. As we said in the previous article, the house is occupied at present by Mr. A. Barclay Walker, and our illustrations show that the gardens and grounds are maintained in a state of great perfection.

It has been a subject of constant advocacy in these pages that a house should have some relation to its surroundings—that its gardens and grounds should be, as it were, a further extension of itself. We are too apt in this country to think that our dwelling-places are enclosed within four walls, and that the gardens which adorn them are a region apart. This springs, no doubt, from the nature of our climate; but in Italy and France the great old gardeners never forgot that the dwelling-place included the gardens also. In our own country the old gardeners had the same idea. They also constructed banqueting-houses and garden buildings of other kinds, which tempted people to make use of their gardens, as one may say, for residential purposes. It was, moreover, the practice to carry the spirit of architecture into the pleasure—*to create, at least within the immediate vicinity of the house, rectangular, or somewhat formal*

arrangements, and to plant hedges and train columnar trees or bushes to give a verdant approach to architectural forms. These remarks are made because, although the gardens of Bradfield, as they are now planned, are not old, they are carried out much in the spirit of older times, and they present features which might well be an example or inspiration to others who wish to adorn such houses suitably and appropriately.

We shall briefly recur to the older interests of the place, so that it may be seen how the house has been transformed. The beauty of the situation, which is in the pastoral valley of the Culm, where it flows from its source in the Blackdown Hills by Uffculme to Cullumpton, will not be forgotten. There are scenes in the vicinity that might have employed the pencil of a Claude, and waters that will still make the angler happy. Here was established in the oldest times whereof we have record a family named after the place, Bradfelle or Bradfield, but the Walronds came in probably before the time of Henry III., and have ever since continued to possess the estate, though it more recently passed, in lineal descent, through the female line to another family, which assumed the name and honours of the old possessors. Little remains to tell us of the lives of the long generations of this ancient house, and we are left to assume that its members took their part in the local affairs of their district, and in some of the larger concerns of the estate. One of them appears to have been a Baron of Henry III. That they had a house of importance at Bradfield may be implied from the fact that John Walrond, probably fourth in descent from the original proprietor of the name, had licence for his oratory or chapel there on May 17th, 1332. Lysons says that there was an ancient



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THE EAST DRIVE.

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19



"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE OLD BOWLING GREEN.

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[Jan. 2nd, 1904.]



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THE EAST FRONT.

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Jan. 2nd, 1904.)

COUNTRY LIFE.

21



THE EAST SIDE OF THE GARDEN.

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THE SOUTH-EAST FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

chapel, of which no traces remained save some old offices, which from their ruinous state had been pulled down. As a matter of fact, the real position was probably between the large clipped yews on the north side of the house, which are seen in several of our pictures. We understand that that part of the gardens still retains, or was lately known by, the name of Chapel Yard.

When we described the interior of the house, we gave an account of the restoration which was effected by Mr. Walrond, afterwards Sir John Walrond—raised to the baronetage in 1876—in and about the year 1861. Nothing of the old features that could be saved was lost in that restoration, the work being carried on in a spirit of veneration, and with a great regard for the evidences of the past. The mansion possessed little distinction



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THE SOUTH BOX WALK.

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in architectural character externally save its windows. Its walls were plastered with rough-cast, and were almost destitute of buttresses, cornices, and string-courses, while the parapets had nothing but plain flat copings, and a few wooden ornaments had been placed on the gables. The changes effected in the hall for the greater security of the splendid hammer-beam roof, causing the old hall window on the east side to be replaced by two windows, made a difference externally, but without affecting the fine architectural character. The ornamental details added at the time did much to increase the beauty of the structure, and that it is not lacking in architectural merit will be seen in our pictures.

It was necessary, however, to adapt it to modern needs, and as the kitchens and offices occupied a large part of the south front, they were removed to another position, and, the porch attached to the hall being inconvenient for the approach of carriages, it was considered desirable to make a new entrance on the south side, where a wall was in a very dilapidated state, and had to be rebuilt. The opportunity was seized of relieving the monotony of the old front on this side by adding the projecting porch, and also bay windows, similar to those of the two eastern gables. Again, on the north

variety in the features. Approaching on the east through a low gate of beaten iron, between rude stone walls overshadowed by fir trees, we reach the enclosure of the garden formed by a low wall of stone, rough, but with a moulded coping, over which roses and other climbers have cast their mantle of beauty. Two lofty gate-posts, which perhaps belonged to the older garden, each crested with a sculptured urn, have between them gates of hammered iron, both appropriate and good, holding above the entrance the armorial achievement of the Walronds. There are fine yew and box hedges also, and the wall has richly-worked vases and urns at intervals upon its parapet. The form of this garden is rectangular, and it has the spirit of enclosure appropriate to the situation. On one side are the noble clipped yews, all quaint and attractive, reminding us much of the examples at Levens and Heslington. There is nothing, however, of the grotesque or imitative in them, the forms being merely simple and quaint, in most cases a square base surmounted by rings of the dark greenery, and crested by a beehive shape. These line a beautiful grass walk, and are an approach to the old bowling green, overhung with the ragged arms of the firs.

Remarkably beautiful is the lake or pond on the south side.



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THE EAST END.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

side, projecting stacks were added to act as buttresses, and to serve as the bases for the chimney shafts which originally stood on the top of the straight wall. We would draw special attention to the successful character of this architectural restoration in relation to the restoration of the gardens. Our picture taken from the south-east shows very clearly both the effect of dividing the large hall window on the east side into two windows, and of erecting the fine projecting porch and the characteristic bay windows on the south front. As will be noticed, ivy and other clinging growths have taken kindly to the newer portions of the front, and relieved the lines of the architecture without concealing them or interfering with their character.

Those who remembered Bradfield before Sir John Walron took it in hand, were able to realise the great changes in the grounds in the immediate neighbourhood of the house which were due to his taste and skill. If he trusted much to his architect in the adornment of the edifice, it was his own love for garden beauty and adornment that contributed nearly everything to the charming surroundings, which Mr. Latham's pictures so successfully illustrate. The pleasure is mostly upon a level, but, owing to the character of enclosure, there is

This also is rectangular, and there is a flight of steps down to its margin. It is singular in being entirely enclosed by a magnificent close box hedge, than which we have never seen a better. The pleasant green, contrasting with the lighter verdure of the turf, and again with the varied hues of the coniferous and deciduous trees, has a peculiar and special charm. Here is, indeed, a triumph of harmonious arrangement in garden form and colour. We think it worth while to point out how admirable is the effect of this enclosed sheet of water, and how different is its attraction from that presented by a winding lake or a pond in a tree-shadowed hollow.

The sculpture is well employed in this beautiful Devonshire garden. There are few figures—indeed, we believe only one, by the lake—but an abundance of fine garden work is seen in the elegant vases and the richly-sculptured urns. These, with the gate-posts, are the distinctive features of the place, and add point and character to the arrangements. For the rest, the Bradfield gardens are radiantly beautiful, and fragrant with a wealth of flowers, contrasting favourably with the grey stone of the mansion, and the dark green of box and yew. Sir John Walron displayed both skill and judgment in the formation and development of the garden. It assumed rare beauties under his hand



THE LAKE FRINGED WITH BOX.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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and has gone on improving with the progress of years. With no ordinary pleasure do we illustrate the garden and garden enclosures of the attractive Devonshire mansion whose interior interests were lately our theme.

A GOOD SNIPE AND WOODCOCK BOOK.

THREE is a pathos about this latest volume of the "Fur and Feather" Series, as it was at the commencement of its career, but now the "Fur, Feather, and Fin." Hitherto the natural history of each feathered species has been done by the Rev. H. A. Macpherson, and we know only too well that the reason his name is not found at the head of the natural history in this volume which treats of the snipe and woodcock is that death has removed this fine naturalist and

made trial of 10 and 6, and all intermediates, as combining the most effective killing circle with the needful closeness of pattern. There is one point on which we cannot bring ourselves to agree with him (it is only due to Mr. Shaw to say that he does not seem to expect that anybody will), namely, that snipe and woodcock—and the former especially—are not a great deal more easy to kill, and may not be killed at longer range, than such a bird as the partridge. The contrary conviction is too deep-rooted to be eradicated by his arguments. He is rather curious, especially for a Norfolk man, as he seems to be, in his comments on the partridge. He says (and he seems to be speaking of the bird rising before one, not as it tops the hedge as it is driven towards one, when the observation would be just enough) that you can hardly fire at a partridge too quickly, but can hardly fire at a snipe too slowly. The latter let us accept, but how can we go with him in that remark about a partridge that rises close to one in bracken or other thick covert?

It is a critic's duty, however, to pick holes, and there is a great deal more to commend than find fault with. The writer



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BRADFIELD: THE EAST WALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

lover of Nature. It is a pathos of which we are conscious, even while we recognise that Mr. de Visme Shaw has done his work well in filling the blank so made. His experience is ample and his observation keen.

This is one of the best of a series that has been rather unequal in its merits, not only one volume being of unequal merit with another, but different chapters of the same volume often varying a good deal in quality. The shooting of the snipe and of the woodcock no doubt are the features that will attract most readers to peruse the present book, and it is good to see that Mr. Shaw—for by far the bulk of the work is his—is exceedingly sane and moderate in his views on the subject. He is as far removed as is possible from being a faddist. The gun that he recommends for both snipe and woodcock is a twelve-bore with right barrel cylinder and left barrel choke. Is this not universally the best gun for birds of any kind getting up before one, when the second shot is likely to be longer than the first, and the first likely to be quite a short one? Number 8, with a full charge of both shot and powder, is the size of shot he advises for snipe, having

approaches with a broadly open mind the question whether you should walk up or down wind on snipe. The latter is, no doubt, the common doctrine. What he says is practically this—walk down wind when you can get within shot that way, that is to say, when the birds are lying well and there is a strong wind, so that they will not hear you. Walk up wind when they are wild and the day is still, for that gives you a better chance of getting within range. Equally wise and sane is his view as to when to shoot the snipe—whether to snap him as he rises, or to give him a chance to get over his first swift swerves and then take him. His counsel is virtually to adopt the second plan if the bird rises near enough to give a hope that he will have done twisting before he is out of shot, but shoot him at once if he gets up so far off that he would be out of shot when he has done twisting. Of woodcock, again, he says that they may be very hard to shoot, as when they are among trees, or very easy, as when in the open. Mr. Shaw knows something of the poaching dodges—we are very sure only by observation, not by practice. All the woodcock in a covert will always leave it in the morning singly and by the



BRADFIELD : THE SOUTH-EAST ANGLE.

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"COUNTRY LIFE."

same side, so that a man posting himself there just before dawn may account for pretty nearly every one in the covert. For beating up woodcock he prefers boys to spaniels, because the bird flies away so low from the dogs. While admitting the general and incontestable view that woodcock breed with us very much more numerously than they did, he makes out what we think a very good case for imagining that their decrease in the shooting season is less than commonly supposed. The coverts are not run through nearly as often as in the days before breech-loaders and beating forward came in. This in itself might be a reason why fewer woodcock are found. He mentions other reasons of less moment than this, which is certainly a strong one, and yet admits that the birds actually are less in number than they used to be at the shooting time. We think he attributes too much to the change in our seasons, as he puts it, as a motive of



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BRADFIELD: THE GARDEN DOOR.

the movements of both snipe and woodcock, and think also that he exaggerates the actual change. He speaks as if hard winters had not been known for many years; but this is hardly the true fact. Nor do we believe that in the case of the snipe "when there comes a really severe winter the birds are driven further and further south, and a large proportion of them never find their way back, so that the home-breeding stock of the following summer is largely reduced in numbers." That the hard winter drives them south, we readily admit, but not that "a large proportion" do not return, etc.

A point he makes that is worth noting is the probability that the great snipe is often overlooked in the bag, being mistaken for a large specimen of the common "Full Snipe." The writer devotes several pages to the vexed question of how the "drumming" of a snipe is produced, concluding with an open verdict inclining to favour the view, in which we should be disposed to concur, that it is made by the action of wing and tail combined; certainly it is not vocal.

There are many hints worth the attention of the snipe-shooter—as that snipe lie best on a dull, heavy day after a moonlight night, worst on a bright day following a dark night; that for two hours after sunrise, and again for two before sunset, snipe may be found on their feeding grounds, though not one

may be there in the intermediate daylight hours; that when waiting for flighting snipe, and unable to get good cover, it is an excellent plan to pin a piece of white paper on the ground about twenty yards from you, to distract their notice from yourself. Mr. Shaw is much in favour of extending the close time for snipe till October 1st.

The other chapters need not detain us long. There is one on the migration of the woodcock by Mr. Shaw himself. Mr. R. J. Ussher writes of "Snipe and Woodcock in Ireland," and it is satisfactory to read that "snipe frequent Ireland in enormous numbers still." The volume ends with the inevitable short chapter by Mr. A. T. Shand, who has shown that he knew so well and intimately the culinary processes best adapted for bringing out the fine flavour of all the game birds and animals, on the "Cookery of the Snipe and Woodcock," and the book is brightened by two or three of Mr. Thorburn's charming bird studies and by illustrations by Mr. C. Whymper.

WARNER AND HIS MEN.

NOW that the first phase of the fight is over, it will be an appropriate opportunity to recapitulate and inspect the doings of that M.C.C. eleven which a certain section of the Press thought fit to "crab" and to "guy" at the outset, but with the usual "gag," by way of hedging, "but perhaps the men may pull the club through," as if no credit was due to the club for the selection of the right men for the task of "pulling it through." The first phase, however, interesting as it is, is not really the most critical, as it contains but a single test match; for the series may be regarded as general actions as opposed to reconnaissances in force. There is a lot of hard fighting yet to be done, but hard fighting is seldom better done than when one has persistently succeeded. In the reconnaissances the Englishmen fared brilliantly. The strong New South Wales side, the backbone of the All-Australia eleven, went down beaten after having played two innings to Warner's one; Victoria suffered similarly; South Australia escaped by the skin of its teeth; and Queensland, losing, but fighting hard, was the first side to send Warner's team to the wickets a second time. In these four preliminary engagements the Colonials lost 73 wickets, the Englishmen only 42; yet the latter won three matches outright, and morally won the fourth. The Englishmen who were playing must have entered on the first really great match with much of the confidence felt by the Englishmen who were watching their deeds at a distance.

That confidence was justified in the issue; but though the victory came in the end, the defeated ones put up such a magnificent fight, that if honours were not quite evenly divided, inasmuch as five wickets is a big margin, they did enough and more than enough to show that there will be no future surrender till the last cartridge is spent. It is probably true that the Australian bowling has not proved itself to be as strong as it was, especially on Australian wickets; indeed, facts seem to indicate that the bowling of the two sides is about equal, and that the succeeding games will be won more with the bat and by the fielding than with the ball, though I am not forgetting the fine bowling of Rhodes in the test match. To get five wickets and to give away but 94 runs in an innings of 485 is a remarkable performance, and as encouraging as it is remarkable. Critics in England, by the way, have questioned Warner's policy in bowling Rhodes so little and in bowling Bosanquet so much; but apart from the fact that Warner, who is on the spot, is a better judge than those who are far away, there is another point to be considered. Fine bowler as Rhodes is, even on a plumb wicket, Bosanquet is even more likely to send down an unplayable ball. As most cricketers know, he bowls leg-breaks with that turn of the hand that indicates to the batsman what to expect. Now, every now and again a ball delivered with the leg-break action breaks back, and breaks back

very fast ; if that ball is well pitched and is straight, it is about as hard a ball to play as a bowler can send down. No doubt Warner, though realising all the "ifs," thinks that the chance of surprising Noble or Duff, Trumper or Hill, is worth a few runs made off Bosanquet's loose balls. At the same time, the expense is heavy ; but the captain can best form an estimate of what he can afford to spend. With regard to the fielding, it is gratifying to learn that our men have shown rather the better form ; both sides have been brilliant, England the more brilliant. It would be surprising if a few catches were not missed in five days and a-half of cricket, but I gather that only five or six were missed in all, and that as many brilliant ones were made, the two wicket-keepers in particular doing grand work. Some stress has been laid on the fact that Hirst was missed before he scored, and that this miss was particularly unlucky for Australia, as he stayed in to make 60 runs, and the winning hit. In other words, the mistake cost 60 runs, just about the same number that was lost owing to a failure to catch Trumper just after he had passed his century. Had Trumper been caught, Hirst's services would not have been required, so that luck (though missed catches are not luck, but part of the game) was equal ; but the missing of Hirst, being the more dramatic incident, naturally attracted the greater attention.

I said that the Englishmen, if they win, will probably win by their batting ; I founded the remark on the batting strength of their batsmen. Duff, Trumper, Hill, and Noble are as good as any four men in the English side ; perhaps they are better ; but we can easily "pair" Hopkins and Armstrong, and our last five men I regard as five times as strong as the Australian quintette, which contains at least one "sitter" in Saunders, while Howell and Kelly are less likely to make 20 than Relf or Rhodes to make 50. As a matter of detail, every one of the eleven Englishmen has made his century in a big match. I am not writing in this strain because I am blindly sanguine ; the English side had its moments of crisis and anxiety, as had the Australians. Nor can we always expect such an innings from Foster's bat ; but as four good players only contributed 6 runs out of 577, they may be expected to help to make up for Foster's next deficit from 287. What we should all like to see is a big score in a big match from the bat of the popular captain.

Judging from long range, one gathers that Warner has proved himself equally capable and brilliant as commander-in-chief. He behaved with dignity and determination when some "hoodlums" misbehaved ; he played a clean coup when, having won the toss, he ordered the strong New South Wales eleven to bat first ; and he twice "closed" his first innings. All these things mark the strong captain and the experienced cricketer, while his personality is bound to be as attractive as his rule is kindly and firm.

W. J. FORD.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

A BEAUTIFUL THRUSH.

THE fieldfare is pre-eminently, perhaps, our bird of midwinter. His warning cry of "Chak, chak, chak," as, one after another, the flock tails in slow flight from the ground to some distant tree, seems always associated with wintry scenes and wastes of snow. In the summer he is not with us—though he often stays until after the nightingales are singing—and in autumn and spring he is too wild to be noticed much ; but when snow hides the turf or frost binds



T. A. Metcalfe. A MURDERER AT LARGE.

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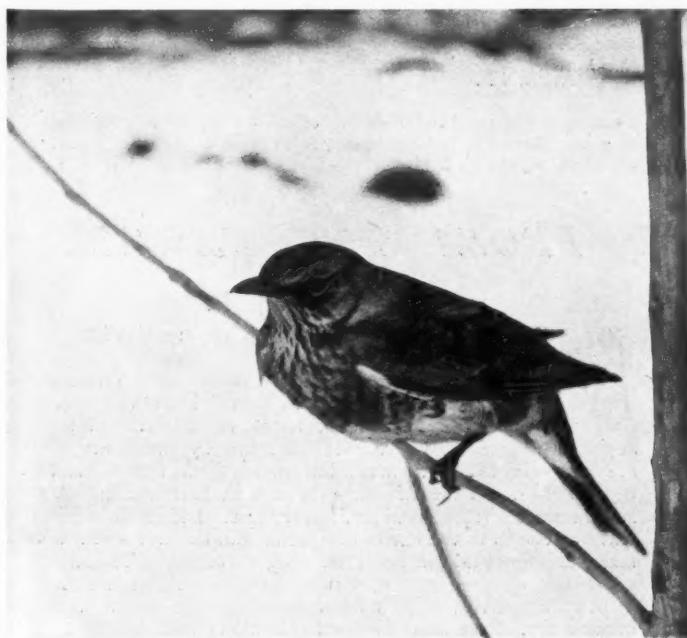
it hard, life for the fieldfare becomes too urgent a problem and food too cruel a necessity for him to spend his days in alarms. Then you may often see him huddled on the snow before you or perched in full view upon some low near twig, and admire the dainty colouring of which representation in black and white conveys no real idea. His auburn mantle and clear grey nape, harmonising so perfectly with the pale buff, deepening to tawny, on his black-splashed breast, with the dark brown and slate, shaded to black above and paling to white below, make him by far the most beautiful of thrushes seen in Britain.

THE STARVING FIELDFARE.

Yet a melancholy always attaches in the mind to the fieldfare's beauty, because you most often see it when the bird lies dying in your hand in the last throes of starvation. Ordinarily you can only recognise him by his longer shape, more deliberate flight, and lighter patch above a very dark tail—as well as by his voice—from other thrushes. On the ground, sometimes, from a distance, you can see that he stands more erect than a thrush, and often raises his tail fanwise like a blackbird, after a short flight. But you see little or nothing of his delicate colouring, till there comes a day, one after several like it, of snow or frost, when the fieldfare lies motionless before your steps, and makes only fluttering, frog-like hops over the snow when you stoop to pick him up. Others not quite so far gone may essay a long, low flight over the whitened field, but so weak they are, and, oh, so light, that when they strike the snow at the end of their flight, they roll over and over like shot rabbits, yet scarcely ruffling the surface. It is always pitiable to see these pretty foreigners, who have crossed the sea to escape the fierceness of the winter of their native land, thus done to death by the treachery of ours.

A BIRD WITH MANY ENEMIES.

It is not only the weather which decimates the regiments of fieldfares that encamp upon our winter fields. The gun-with-the-ten-shilling-liscence is often levelled at them, because they are undeniably good to eat and easy to shoot sitting. Weasel and stoat often stalk them successfully from cover ; and when they are growing weak with hardship, carrion and hooded crows and even rooks will kill them and pick their poorly-covered bones. But the great enemy of the fieldfares is the sparrow-hawk. Their habits of life would seem to have been acquired in regions where the sparrow-hawk is not a terror to the country-side ; for they feed so far in the open and are so slow in getting



T. A. Metcalfe.

THE STARVING FIELDFARE.

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into shelter that the sparrow-hawk's method of suddenly dashing over the hedge or between the trees takes them unawares. Except that his choice of diet seems to lie especially in the direction of finches and buntings, the sparrow-hawk might surely feed full on fieldfares every day.

FEEDING IN THE OPEN.

And this reminds me that last week for the first time I saw a letter signed "C. S. M." which was published in COUNTRY LIFE on October 31st last, differing from my view that it is the fear of the hawk which prevents most birds from feeding in the open. I fear that I could not have made my meaning clear, because the small bird which "C. S. M." quotes as fearlessly feeding in the open, namely, the skylark, is one of the exceptions—*i.e.*, the birds which are swift enough on the wing to outfly the hawk—by which I tried to prove the rule. By "feeding in the open" I mean ordinarily ranging for food at a greater distance than, say, 50yds. from the nearest shelter. In districts where the fields are small the difference of habit may not seem conspicuous; but in a region of large, open fields you cannot cross many of them without discovering that at 50yds. from the hedge you pass the belt where finches, buntings,

feeding a few yards from the hedge, and got between them and their haven of refuge. They came over the hedge like a shower of stones just above my head, with the hawk among them. He took one, and passed back over the hedge with it, and I caught one small green feather as it floated down.

SPECIAL MEANS FOR KILLING.

The illustration shows some of the points which specially adapt the sparrow-hawk to this method of taking its prey. The wings are short and compact, to enable it to pursue small birds between the branches of the trees; its tail is long and squarely cut, to enable it to make those sharp, right-angled turns which are the essence of success in pursuit of a sharply-dodging victim; and its legs are long and spidery, exactly suited to clutch the helpless small bird in its last shift to wriggle aside from Fate. Most important weapon of all, perhaps, in the sparrow-hawk's equipment is the strangely-long middle toe of each foot, with its needle-like claw at the end. The extra half-inch of "reach" thus given to the hawk must often make all the difference to the small bird in its race for life and death. By its short wings, long, slim legs and elongated middle toe, the sparrow-hawk is easily



L. Biggs.

A CREEK ON THE MEDWAY.

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sparrows, thrushes, and blackbirds feed, while the central open space is tenanted by starlings and larks, which are quick enough to escape the hawk; and near the opposite hedge you find the other small birds again. From the fact, too, that a flock of starlings will fly from any one part of an open field to any other part and at once begin feeding in as close order as they flew, shows that there must be abundance of food everywhere in the open ground, and that it is only fear of the hawk which keeps the others within a short distance of the hedge. Indeed, if we could ask thrushes and blackbirds to give us their idea of the best distance to feed from a hedge, they would put it at 5ft.—just far enough to evade the rush of a stoat from the hedge, and just near enough to dash into cover if a sparrow-hawk suddenly darted over it. And you will generally find that for its "breakfast-table" the thrush selects a stone just about 5ft. from a hedge.

A MURDERER AT LARGE.

You have only to see a sparrow-hawk take his prey once or twice to recognise the advisability for small birds to keep as close to cover as they can. The other day I was walking down the hedge of an hour-glass-shaped field, which has a small coppice filling up the "waist" of the hour-glass at one side, and a gate at the other. From the corner of the coppice to the gate is a very short cut across the field. Hearing the clamour of rooks and jackdaws beyond the coppice, just as I was nearing the gate on the other side, I looked across and saw a sparrow-hawk dash out of the coppice, while the rooks and jackdaws, whom he had thus evaded, clamoured above it. He shot straight across the field to the gate near which I stood, and, instead of flying over it, passed swiftly between the two top bars, and at the same instant turned sharply to the right on the other side of the hedge from me. The manoeuvre was completely successful. He had evidently disturbed some greenfinches

distinguished in the hand from any of the falcons. These all have long wings and short, stout talons, as well as a notch at the side of the beak, which is absent in the hawks.

E. K. R.

FROM THE FARMS.

THE FARMERS' RUIN.

MANY of those who went to the rural districts for their Christmas holidays must have been depressed by the accounts now prevalent of the conditions to which the farmers have been reduced. In one neighbourhood, three large farms, all lying adjacent to one another, and belonging to the same estate, are not only to be vacated, but each of the tenants is to be brought to the hammer during the next four weeks. A very similar state of things exists in every part of England, from the extreme South to the extreme North; and the worst of it is that many landlords do not see their way to making the abatement which has been customary under similar circumstances before. They, themselves, have been reduced almost to the verge of bankruptcy, and a large proportion of them were simply waiting for their rents in order to live. The consequence is, as we have said, financial ruin in many cases, and it is very difficult to see

how such a catastrophe can be avoided. The effects of the past year are likely to be bitterly felt for many a long day to come.

CO-OPERATIVE BANKS.

One of the most interesting leaflets ever issued from the Agricultural Department is that which has just been printed on farmers' co-operative societies. During the last ten or fifteen years co-operation has at least made a beginning in English agriculture, although it has not attained to anything like the dimensions reached on the Continent. All that the writer of the pamphlet is able to say is that the advantages of co-operation "are slowly becoming more generally recognised by British farmers." On the Continent one of the earliest forms taken by the movement was the establishment of co-operative banks, by means of which small holders and peasant farmers in Germany, Italy, and Belgium were able to borrow money for the purchase of agricultural requisites. In Ireland credit banks of this kind have been started in several districts under the guidance of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, and in England there are one or two banks going. It cannot be said, however, that the movement is a strong one, probably for the reason that borrowing is a less common practice amongst agriculturists in England than among the same class in any other part of the world.

COMBINATION FOR PURCHASE.

The most effective form of combination undoubtedly among farmers takes the shape of joint-purchase societies. Their usual function is to buy farming requisites—particularly manures, foodstuffs, and seed—wholesale. The combination is able to do business on a very much larger scale than would be possible to any one individual. It also guarantees payment, and this circumstance of course places it in a very favourable position for buying. It need not be recalled that the farmer left to himself was very much handicapped under the old system, and it too frequently happened that he got into debt and was afraid to complain. A common way for him to do was to order his manure or cake or seed-corn with a promise to pay when he realised his grain, his potatoes, his stock, or whatever he relied on for making money. Occasionally these resources would fail, and the debt would stand over. A man in debt is not predisposed to criticise severely the stuff supplied to him, and accordingly the farmer had to put up with bad and cheap manure at a dear price, and inferior cake or corn. These things are avoided when a number of men join together in order to make their purchase.

CO-OPERATIVE DAIRIES.

In regard to dairy produce very little progress has been made in co-operation, but the official writer does not take a very decided line in regard to it. He makes the not very original remark that the development of the Danish butter trade is largely due to co-operation, and he says also that uniformity in flavour, in appearance, and in consistency, is the characteristic most required in butter intended for general consumption, and to secure it the co-operative creamery is better than private dairy work. But, on the other hand, the dairies that are succeeding in Great Britain are not those which work for general consumption, but which produce a special article, for a special public, at a special price, and this it would have been well for the writer in question to point out. Uniformity has been designated by somebody as "the grocer's shibboleth," and it really cannot be attained except by the sacrifice of quality. If you mix a first, second, and third quality of butter together, it is clear that the result cannot be excellent, and we take leave to doubt the wisdom of issuing in an official publication anything which can be construed into praise of mediocrity.

DAIRY NOTES.

In the new number of the Journal of the Board of Agriculture there are several things of interest to dairy farmers. One is the significant statement that from next year onwards the Russian Government will make a grant of £9,552 in aid of the improvement and expansion of the butter industry in European Russia. This is an example of the difference in policy between ourselves and Continental countries. Our Government abstains from practical interference; abroad they take the matter in hand vigorously, and spare neither money nor trouble when they wish to establish or strengthen a trade. It all means more competition in our home market, and probably at no distant date a considerable fall in the price of butter, because the Russian farmers and peasants, owing to their poor style of living, can afford to produce butter and other agricultural produce at a lower price than is possible among those who live on a higher scale. In the same Journal there is given a simple butter test that deserves all the publicity that can be got for it. We therefore quote it in full: "A simple method of determining the percentage of water in butter is to heat a known weight of the butter in a small saucer-shaped vessel over a small spirit or gas lamp for a few minutes, with constant stirring, until no more steam is observed to arise from it. After being allowed to cool, the butter is then weighed

again, and the loss of weight shown gives the amount of water which was in the butter. This method only requires a pair of scales with weights—a cheap apothecary's set is enough—in addition to the lamp and vessel. It is practised in the Cork and Limerick markets, and is quite accurate enough for practical purposes."

FROZEN OUT.

THE wind sleeps when the Frost King stalks in the fulness of his might, and all the air "a solemn stillness holds," save when the whirr of the curler and the sharp ring of the skater break the silence and carry the news of sport to listening ears in and across the valley. Every pond and lake is frozen, and the river, too, is about to succumb. The ground is like granite underneath its thick wrapping of snow. The country has an unfamiliar look, and makes one dream of being in a strange and unknown land. But it is very beautiful. The blackthorn hedges have not yet been conquered by the rime, and they stand out in bold relief against the glistening white, marking the outlines of the fields and roads. The limes and the ash and the beeches are in skeleton, outlined in silver against the clear blue of the sky, delicately yet distinctly. The Scotch fir, the silver, and the Corsican defy the onslaughts of winter, and retain the rich hues which remind one of summer; and on the outer fringe of the woods the rowan tree, here and there, peeps out shyly, ablaze with scarlet berries, which show up brightly against the vivid green of the pines. The blue slated roofs of the new cottages, and the sombre thatch of the old, cannot be distinguished from the red tiles of the granaries, for the snow makes all alike. The farmer is unhappy, and looks at the glass with an anxious eye. His ploughing is well forward, and his manure is being carted from the folds to be ready for next summer's turnip sowing. The frost also will pulverise his fallows much better than he can, and so save him labour a few months hence, but his root crop is short, and turnips are still standing in the fields at the mercy of the weather, and the danger of damage being done to them is great, and he grumbles accordingly, and wishes the frost would go.

Fur and feathers have a harder time than the farmer. They are frozen out. The early bird gets no worms, for they are frozen in. The rooks lay siege to the farmer's cornstacks and tear the covering off to get at the corn beneath. Book naturalists preach that this they do from force of circumstances, and not because they like it. True, Nature may have designed them for scavengers merely—to clean up the grub and other odds and ends which infest the soil and the products thereof—but if this be so, then some sable-plumaged Adam must have yielded to the temptation of some dusky Eve, and eaten of forbidden fruit, for their children take very kindly indeed to the barley and the wheat, which by rights should have no place in their menu. And not in winter only, when the plough lies idle, is this so, but in spring likewise, when the sower goes forth to sow, and in summer, when the sun is ripening the cornfields, the stolen grain seems sweeter than the honestly-earned worms and grubs. The cheery, chattering, thieving sparrow is more barefaced in his burglarious habits than ever. Not only does he mix with bad company on the broken cornricks, but he enters your barns and granaries, under your very nose, if you have left a trellised window open, and reaps that which he has never helped to sow; but he is so above-board with it all that you cannot be very angry with him. He gives himself no airs of sanctity, and openly proclaims himself to be what he is—a thief and a robber. The sprightly and genteel-looking robin has, to some extent, thrown off his air of reserve and hauteur. He is an aristocrat by nature and in his habits, and though the cravings of nature compel him to accept the gifts of the charitable, he takes them as a gentleman should, and not with the servility of the common herd. The blackbird, too, favours the haunts of men when the winter winds blow, and the dole ungrudgingly given him is in the nature of a payment in advance, for it is he, along with his brother the thrush, who sings the opening hymn of the year, when the spring-time comes.

The cock o' the North and the bullfinch have come down from the moorlands and uplands. They linger in the outlying hedgerows, unless dire distress compels them to conquer their repugnance to civilisation, and in very distress to partake of the husks which the swine do eat. The wood-pigeons go to the unpulled swedes, and take their share of outdoor relief, and the wild ducks, cut off from all supplies, take their courage in both hands, and steer for the sea-coast, where yet sustenance is to be found. The wild geese from the far North pass high overhead, also on their way to the coastline, uttering the while strange cries, as of protest against their enforced migration. The partridges gather in coveys, and pick up a scanty dinner from the already well-picked barley stubbles. The little brown bunches of misery huddle together as close as they can, and look more than anything else like an evicted family in the "distressful country." The rabbits and hares have a somewhat hard time too, but they have not so much to complain of as the birds. They can find shelter, the rabbits in their burrows and the hares in the thick undergrowths of the woods. They have to be satisfied with short commons, but they are never really "without a penny in their pocket." There is always a turnip-field to go to, and there are several young plantations about with nice sappy trees ready for peeling. Neither the feelings of the farmer, nor those of the woodman, are considered, and they go on the principle of taking things as they come; and for the time, they are safe from their wily enemy, man. No tricky trap is waiting for them at their very doors, and no snaky wire hides in the grass beyond. The fox is best off of all. The frost cannot reach him in his "earth" below the ground surface; his dinner is ready to hand in the form of rabbit and partridge and pheasant; no sound of hunter's horn or bloodthirsty cry of hounds disturbs him in his morning ramble; for hounds cannot hunt. His digestion is good, his sleep is sound, and he knows no care.

VAN CHILDREN.

If it were for no other reason than that they are the only open-airists, it would be impossible to watch the nomads of the van pass away without a touch of regret; but modern conditions are against them. It is as though a policeman were continually saying "Move on." Long since the farmer decided that he would no longer let them camp even in the most useless corner of his fields, and he was thoroughly supported by the squire. One missed his poultry in the morning, and the other his game, for the van-man, whether a Romany or not, has usually picked up a good many gipsy-like ways in the course of his wanderings. Among his manifold weaknesses is one for a good lurcher that can pick up a rabbit in a turnip-drill, and leap a five-barred gate with a hare in his mouth. So on that ground these vagrom folk are disconcerted. They used, whenever possible, to pitch their camps on commons, but the local authorities are averse even to that, and so they are obliged to pursue their calling, as it were,



R. W. Robinson.

THE GIPSY CALDRON.

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from him stuff for a Sunday waistcoat. Then came the clockmaker, selling huge watches that would not go, and spectacles you could not see through, and many other trifles of slight description. The tinker came shouting "Old pots to mend," and soon drew a concourse of children to watch him at his little fire soldering the cottage kettles and mending broken ware. Jolliest of all was the rag-and-bone man, who drove his donkey down the village street, gaily blowing his horn the while, and holding out distracting

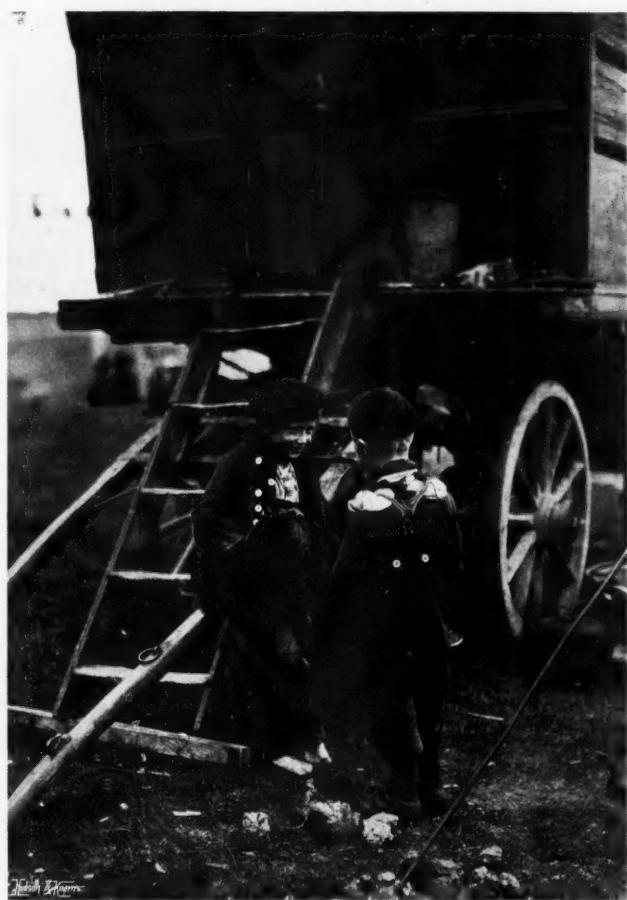


R. W. Robinson.

THE GIPSY'S CASTLE.

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hopes of tosby to the juvenile population. When they foregathered at night at Poosie Nancie's store, or its equivalent, we doubt if the beggar's opera they performed was ever quite so brilliant as the one drawn by the imagination of Burns, for the wandering people are a jealous people, and give point to the adage "Set a thief to catch a thief." Yet they picked up many songs that, though scarcely adapted for the modern drawing-room, are not without a wit and character of their own. They addressed each other in language not blunted and spoiled by modern politeness and convention, but direct, plain, and yet embellished with many choice epithets and fancy phrases. They were, indeed, the outcast of the population, and in a world which is, perhaps, growing overburdened with industry, they set an example of idleness. The only means of getting bread to which they conscientiously objected was that of working for it. To beg, borrow, or steal came as naturally to them as lying; and probably the stern moralist will without the quiver of an eyelid recognise that their race is dead or dying. The yokel of to-day has become quite fashionable in the matter of shopping. He is never so poor but that a grocer's cart will stop to take his orders, and that ubiquitous person, the commercial traveller, finds even in the labouring man a fitting subject for his cajolery. Moreover, Mary, with her bunch of blue ribbons, has no longer



R. W. Robinson.

BROTHERS.

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any proper fair to go to. She has, it is true, her mop, statis, or hiring, but this is merely an occasion for making a bargain, and the so-called refinement of the present generation has taken much that was characteristic out of these meetings of employer and employed. Of old the farmer when engaging a servant would make him or her, for the matter of that, step out and show his or her paces. He would feel the flesh and muscle, just as if he were buying a cow, and Cobbett and other writers of his way of thinking considered that the hiring closely approximated in character to an Eastern slave market. Far otherwise is it with the agricultural servant of to-day. He has come to be scarce and rare, and draws up his contract with his master with as much care as is bestowed upon a treaty between two great nations.

Yet there is a kind of modern substitute for the pedlar of old. The van of to-day is a huge and mighty vehicle, on which are slung vast quantities of baskets, brushes, and other household gear, so that its arrival in a village is like the opening of an emporium. But though things have changed, the same spirit animates the modern that the ancient possessed, and particularly is this noticeable in regard to the young people. It was Gilbert White, if we mistake not, who described a young gipsy girl of eighteen whom he found living in a tent scarce large enough to cover her. That sort of maiden is not quite extinct. For mere physical attributes



R. W. Robinson. STIRRING THE POT.

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the children of the vanmen of to-day are eminently deserving of study. The open air has given colour to cheeks which always were full and fleshy; the eyes, usually grey, are bright and keen as those of some shy wild animal, and usually about these urchins there is nothing of those curious qualities developed by over-civilisation, shame, modesty, and so forth. They are, to use a homely and familiar simile, as bold as brass, and many of



R. W. Robinson. INDEPENDENT ALREADY.

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them might almost be described as past masters in the art of begging immediately after birth. Most of them really live in the van, and how they manage to pack together during the hours devoted to sleep is a mystery, for if you look inside there appears to be but one tiny room, and one is puzzled to think how, even if they all lay on the floor, they would be any less tightly packed than sardines in a box. Moreover, like all outdwellers, the vanman hates fresh air at his doss, as he calls it. Therefore he carefully closes every aperture through which a breath of fresh air might enter, and the air in the morning must be suffocating. But then that is the end of it. What keeps these people so healthy is that all day long they are out

in the open. Many efforts have been made, as it were, to capture and tame these children, and there is, we believe, some enactment by which they are supposed to be sent to school for so many days in the year; but in their opinion measures of this kind were made to be evaded, and the spirit of these wanderers is, indeed, very seldom broken by the schoolmaster's rod. They usually stop their peregrinations for a month or two during the hardest weather of winter; but "they are out

long before the swallow comes, before even the sweet violets that take the winds of March with beauty," the old horse is put into the shafts again, the old van is fitted up with such utensils as are found necessary, or as many of them as are obtainable, and away goes the ship of the highway, a smile curling the thin lips which enclose the man's pipe, something lighting up even the dejection of that beast of burden, his wife, while the children are punching one

another and chortling in the wantonness of their joy. Of a truth they are leaving behind many things which interfered with their enjoyment. They have for a season bid good-bye to care; they are leaving the law and the commandments to the street-bred people, and though there are rural policemen to be dodged, it is an easier game to play than dodging those minions of the law whose business it is to keep order in the town. "Sorrow take them," says the countryman at sight of their approach, and yet which of us, even when reviling these Ishmaels, has not a secret sympathy with them, and a longing that is with difficulty repressed to take what Walt Whitman called the long white road leading any whither?



R. W. Robinson. Copyright CHILDREN OF THE OPEN AIR.



R. W. Robinson. Copyright ON THE VAN STEPS.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

SIR WALTER SCOTT may be entitled to no high place as an authority upon historical fact, but his vivid realisation of the persons and occurrences of the past have taught us more about it than has been done by more diligent and exact students. Anyone will feel this who will compare Lady Burghclere's *George Villiers, Second Duke of Buckingham* (Murray) with the slight, yet brilliant, sketch of the same personage in "Peveril of the Peak." He who was "not one but all mankind's epitome" requires a great deal of imagination to get him set visibly among his natural surroundings. Lady Burghclere has brought to her task both diligence and ability, her book is a valuable storehouse of information, and her narrative is interesting and straightforward; but ever she seems too intent on working up to the moralist's warning set forth in the last chapter: "As he sinned so he suffered." Luckily or unluckily, this is not the way of Fate and Nature in a world where it is not uncommon to see the ungodly flourish and the just man in adversity. And Buckingham, though he died in the house of a yeoman farmer of catching a chill, after a hard life probably had more than his due share of worldly pleasure. He had the temperament to enjoy life, and there is nothing to show that he was troubled by the doubts and questionings that might have assailed a finer conscience. From his clever, light-hearted, passionate father he inherited a vain and non-moral disposition, and he also possessed the good looks and charming manner that won him friends in the most unexpected places. The age in which he lived helped to develop his natural tendencies. Had he been born in a Puritan family they might have been held in check, and he would never have been heard of; but one cannot imagine him of the same company as Praise-God-Barebones. Brought up side by side with Charles II., and associated with his gay Court, he impersonated the revolt from Puritanism. Lady Burghclere might with advantage have painted some of the characters to whom he was a contrast—the narrow, self-righteous, opinionated Puritans who survived the Restoration. Hypocrisy was the vice they engendered, but he appears to have had no trace of it. Even his amours, over which

his biographer glides decorously, were sincere as long as they lasted. He made love to the plain woman whom he married with sincere enthusiasm. His connection with the Countess of Shrewsbury was, for him, prolonged and faithful. It and his own folly led him into frequent calamity. The duel in the French style, wherein he slew the long-suffering husband, was a mistake that a colder, shrewder villain would have avoided at any price. Only the most foolish arrogance could have prevented him from seeing the affront it was to the whole aristocracy of England when he had the child born to him by the Countess baptised Earl of Coventry, and at its speedy death buried with so much pomp and ceremony in Westminster Abbey. In his futile courtship of women of royal blood, the same absence of sense and self-restraint let him, in plain English, make a fool of himself. Nor can we with the evidence before us admit the justice of the panegyrics passed on him by his contemporaries and repeated by Lady Burghclere. We grant that he was versatile, but then he was not really great in any direction. He was a soldier, but his military proceedings do not show that he could either plan a campaign wisely or carry it out with success. As a politician he has no claim to distinction. Those who designate him a man of letters only mean that he wrote a little, and whether he did so well or ill appears to count for nothing with them. His devotion to alchemy only proves him to have been the prey of impostors. The success of his life may best be judged from a brief epitome of its events.

He was born on January 30th, 1627, eighteen months before the knife of Felton brought the career of his father to a close. Vandycy has left us a fine picture of him and his brother as boys absurdly over-dressed in the manner of the time. At an early age he went to Cambridge, where the most notable circumstance was probably his forming what proved to be a lasting friendship with Abraham Cowley. The brother subsequently travelled on the Continent, and at Paris met their early school-fellow the Prince of Wales, and, according to Bishop Barnet, had already "got into all the vices and impurities of the age." That they deprived the morality of the King has been denied, but Clarendon's

excuse may be taken as adequate: "There are some actions of Appetite and Affection committed which cannot be banished from the age of twenty-one, and Kings are of the same mould as other men." If Charles II. at his earliest age was overburdened with morality, the case was one in which emphatically the child was not the father of the man. Buckingham's influence over him is well illustrated in "Peveril of the Peak," where we see the two men not only suffering from the same vices, but even pursuing the same amours and being rival lovers. The man who never said a foolish thing must have found most congenial company in the exquisite and accomplished Buckingham, who was at once a fop, a rake, a statesman, and a man of literary taste, with at all events sufficient knowledge of these callings to speak wittily and cleverly about them. His brilliance, however, was not backed by stability. He had not the mental energy and concentration which would have enabled him to be great in any one particular, but frittered away his talents as he did his fortune in vain pursuits and useless ostentation. His search for the Philosopher's Stone betrays a certain almost whimsical weakness of character which should have been absent from the head of a sound thinker. It may be that the superstition belonged to the age, yet we could not imagine the really great minds of any age bowing down to it. The good sense of Charles II. or that of Clarendon would have saved him from such a pitfall. No one could fancy Lord Bacon going after such a will-o'-the-wisp, or Fox or Pitt. It points to a mental weakness that is abundantly proved by the events in Buckingham's career, which can only be described as a complete failure. No doubt a man such as he was drew out of life a great deal of conscious and unconscious enjoyment, but, on the other hand, his greatest efforts were followed by the bitterness of failure. One of our poets has said "dear to the heart of a man is a goal that he may not reach," but that refers to those great and noble purposes in life which are unattained and unattainable by the best. He who sets before him a purely material gain has no consolation to assuage the disappointment of defeat, and he has not the dignifying sense of noble effort that satisfies the conscience if it does not crown the wish of the really great man. Buckingham's name lives with that of the dissolute Rochester and the almost equally dissolute King, Charles II.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DOG CRACKING NUTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I think some of your dog-loving readers may be interested to hear of a rather singular habit that a small Aberdeen terrier belonging to myself has formed. It is that of cracking nuts, extracting the nuts from the shells, and eating the nuts. It is rather curious that a dog should care for nuts, although, perhaps, the truffle-hunting dogs show that nuts are not naturally disagreeable to a dog's taste; but added to this there is the funny fact that the dog should have taught himself this trick. Filberts are what he generally gets hold of, and since he has shown himself so adept at the interesting art, everyone is pleased to give him a nut, to see the exhibition of his faculties. He is as clever at dividing the kernel from the husk as a bullfinch with a seed of hemp.—H. G. H.

LAMB AND COW.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Some little time ago you showed us a photograph of a cat receiving its food direct from the cow, without the intervention of the middleman. In supplement to that the enclosed photograph of a lamb being foster-mothered by a cow may be of interest. The two are very good friends, and the relationship between them has been established by a natural means.—F.

WOODCOCK IN CONFINEMENT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In a letter to your paper Mr. C. J. Cornish points out that, unlike the specimens I have kept in confinement, a woodcock in the Zoo was in the habit of making his bill in mess. This is probable, and, indeed, could not be otherwise, having regard to the method of feeding adopted and described by Mr. Cornish. My remark on this point was a refutation of the statement in the new volume of the "Fur and Feather" Series devoted to snipe and woodcock, which affirms that woodcock always feed near water, by reason of the necessity of washing their bills. There is no necessity of the kind supposed; indeed, Mr. Cornish's observation of the dirty bird in the Zoo, which, nevertheless, had a pool of water in his cage, is proof of it. The bird would not have been dirty if water would have kept him clean. Mr. Cornish speaks of this bird making short work of a pot of worms, and this shows that it was unnaturally fed, for "pots" of worms are not discoverable in Nature, and the necessity of probing the earth would be gone in such artificial feeding. When shooting I have learnt two things that are applicable to this case, and, even were direct observation

absent, they would between them be pretty conclusive. When short of a knife or fork at lunch a dirty one may be instantly cleaned to perfection by forcing it a few times into the antiseptic earth. Besides this, when shooting woodcock by the springs in a hard frost (where they feed in the daytime in such weather conditions), I have never known them with dirty bills when shot, and yet sometimes they have been probing in the soft boggy ground when flushed. If it is assumed that some of the glutinous matter on the worm is left upon the bird's bill, the next probe into the earth will remove it; but in a pen, where probing cannot be performed, the natural condition of cleanliness of the bird would be artificially destroyed, and it is clear from Mr. Cornish's observation of the Zoo specimen that it is not the nature of the bird to keep itself clean by means of water washing. Where every attempt to find food is itself an act of cleansing, it does not appear that washing in water is a necessity, and consequently I do not think the habits of the falcon and the heron bear on this question. The birds I kept probed for their food, had no water, and were clean. I have never considered that the Zoo is quite the right place to learn how animals should be kept, but have sometimes thought it was a good lesson in "how not to do it."—ARGUS OLIVE.

YELLOW WAGTAIL IN DECEMBER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—When shooting in Dorsetshire on December 15th of this year (1903), I saw what I believe to be unusual at that time of year—a yellow wagtail. Surely these birds are, as a rule, migratory, and leave us much earlier than this. There was, of course, no possibility of mistaking a bird of such distinctive colouring.—BLANDFORD.

[It is rather unusual, as our correspondent says, to see the yellow wagtail in this country as late as December, the great mass of the birds leaving for the South as early as September, or more often October. Every year, however, it appears that a few stay behind and pass the winter in England, and it is probable that the bird seen by our correspondent has no intention of migrating.—ED.]

LEMON SKYES.

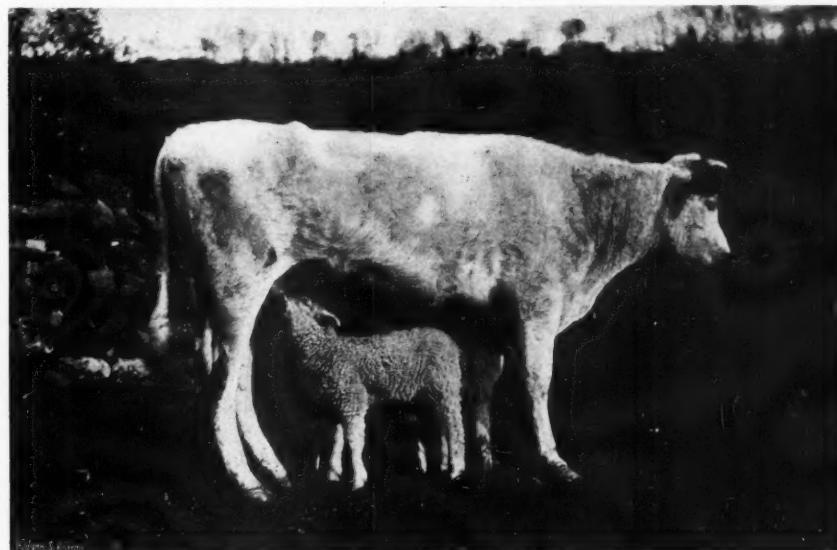
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much interested in Dr. Mackinnon's letter on these terriers in your issue of December 19th, but I should like to correct the impression which the photograph of my dog seems to have given him—that he is a long-coated animal. This is not the case. Nikola's coat, though very thick, is no longer than that of an ordinary rough-coated Scottish terrier. Both he and his parents, Cannoch and Leonach, owned by Dr. Mackinnon's brother, are smaller than the white Scottish terriers one usually sees, and I have always believed this to be the result of their being descended from some of the small grey terriers for which Kilbride was at one time famous, and these dogs, I have been told, had thick, rather soft coats such as one sees in pictures of the old-fashioned working terrier. One cannot help regretting that this type, which used to be considered quite large enough for work, should have been neglected in favour of the large show-bench Scottish terrier, and that the name of "Skye terrier" should have been given to a breed that certainly, in their present form, never existed in Skye, and where long silky coats would seriously hamper them for work. The question of colour seems to me to be one of careful breeding and selection for generations, and I fancy that it would be difficult to prove that there ever was a quite distinct breed of white terriers in Skye which had had no coloured ancestors. If Mr. Harry MacDonald would give the history of his breed, and, if possible, send photographs, I am sure that it would be of interest to many of your readers.—E. J. M. BLACKBURN, Ostaig, Isle of Skye.

PEAT FIRES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The enclosed is a photograph of an old-fashioned hearth, partially converted to suit modern ideas. The fuel used is peat, and it strikes me that with coal at present prices this combustible might be more frequently utilised. Many people, of course, object to the pungent aroma given off by a turf fire, but, considering the amount of distress throughout the country, it seems



strange that the poorer classes do not burn peat rather than coals. In many parts of the country there is a practically unlimited supply. The crofters in the Highlands, who are often much better off than many English labourers, burn very little else, and a fine bright, cheery hearth it makes.—X.

RIDER'S LEG.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In answer to the enquiry of "Huntsman" in your Christmas Number with regard to a remedy for rider's leg, I beg to offer him the following, which enabled me to play polo the whole of one season with both rider's muscles strained, and eventually cured me: Get a rubber bandage 10ft. long and 3in. wide with strings at one end. Roll the bandage with the strings inward. (I will assume that the right leg is the sprained one; if the left, then reverse the directions.) Take the roll with the left hand, and the loose end, passing behind the leg, in the right hand. Put the loose end on the front of the thigh about 8in. above the knee, and roll the bandage over it from left to right up to the fork and fairly tight. If rolled properly, which a very little practice will ensure, this will leave enough to go round behind the hips from right to left side of body, returning across the stomach, and tying the strings to the standing part of the bandage. This bandage will never slip or loosen. He should wear it every time he hunts, and remove it before hacking home. It must be worn next the skin. If this is not clear, and he will write me personally through you, I will try to explain it more fully.—EXPERTUS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

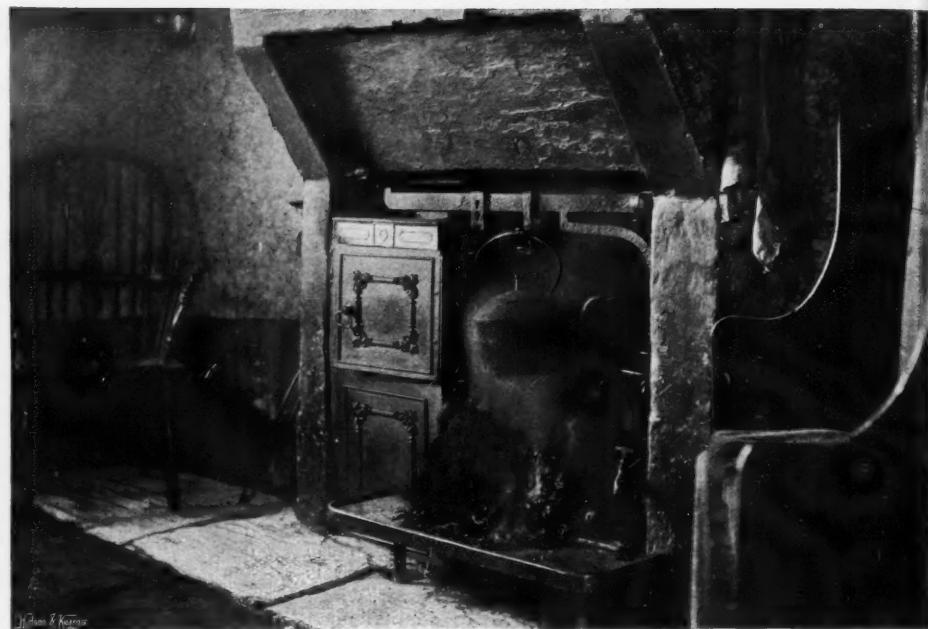
SIR,—If "Huntsman" has been riding for any length of time, he is extraordinarily fortunate if he has escaped a strain of the rider's muscle hitherto. The only remedy I have found available is to go on riding just the same. The most fatal thing is to lie up. It was only last season that I had a rather severe wrench when riding a flippant horse over a small fence; early in the day she jumped much bigger than was needed or expected. The next day I was in such pain that I thought of going home. I met a friend who strongly advised me to go on and to continue to ride and to jump. This I did, using, of course, a certain amount of discretion as to the size and number of the fences, and the length of the day's work. Day by day the pain grew less. It was most acute at first, especially with a gay horse in the morning. Not only had the pain ceased in about ten days, but there was no recurrence during the season. "Huntsman" should, on the principle that prevention is better than cure, make sure that his saddle fits him, and use old and flexible stirrup leathers. I am quite convinced that twice I have been strained because my saddle was too short for me, and once from the use of stiff stirrup leathers. But with every precaution this is one of the ills hunting flesh is heir to, particularly if you ride big Irish horses that are a little green.—A FELLOW-SUFFERER.

P.S.—Different people advise different bandages. I have never worn one.

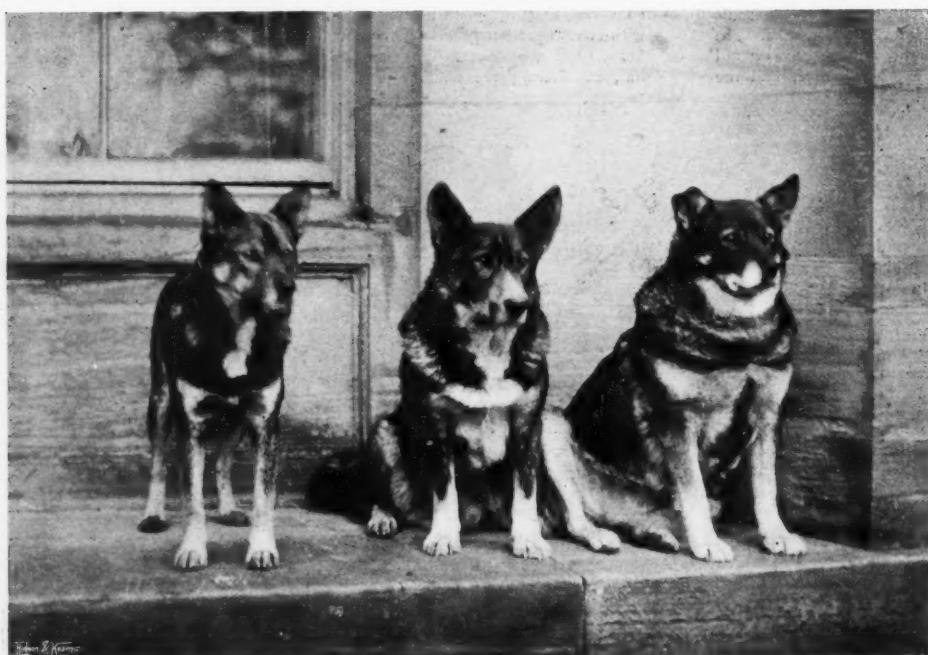
FIN HOUNDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Of all dogs, I know none that for cleverness, devotion, and beauty can compare with the Fin hounds. Their eyes especially are a great feature,



for they are very large, usually brown or hazel, and have the soft liquid expression of a deer or a seal. Their coats are always sweet and clean—wonderfully clean—even after a long gallop along a muddy road, when following a carriage; at least, they are so in a very short time. The coat of a dog of this kind is as soft as the finest silk, and underneath the outer coat is another, of a lighter colour, that is more like sealskin than dog's hair, it is so close and soft. The chief peculiarity of a really good Fin dog is the double curl in its tail, the extreme point of this appendage projecting at right angles through the outer curl in the form of a little tuft. These dogs are to be seen in their native country of various shades of black, white, fawn, and grey; but the handsomest combination is black, fawn, and white, as in the case of the ones here depicted. They are employed to find elk and reindeer. The hunter runs his dog in a leash, and when within about a mile the animal will show by his actions the quarry is before him. In England my dogs have to be content with hunting rabbits; and how they do hunt, too! Nothing will stop them. It is curious to see them. If one of the dogs suspects a rabbit is sitting in a tuft of grass, he alternately crawls and goes on tiptoe; in fact, stalks his game. When close to the rabbit he stands pointing, with a fore leg lifted, for a few seconds, and slowly wagging his tail; he then makes a sudden spring, like a cat, and either catches his prey or misses it. In the latter case, with the exception of two or three bounds, he does not chase. The action is essentially that of a wild creature that tries to take its quarry by surprise and not by pursuit. If the three dogs are out on the hunt together, one of them acts as stalker, as I have described, and the others squat round a little distance off to intercept the rabbit should it dash away, which if it does it generally falls into the very jaws of one of them. What seemed to puzzle my Fin hounds more than anything when I first had them was the fact that rabbits went to ground. When the rabbit popped out of sight under their very noses they used to stand as if something magical had occurred, looking here, there, and everywhere, even towards the sky. However, they soon learnt that in England, at least, rabbits live in holes, and all three may at times now be seen with merely their tails above ground, side by side in the same big burrow. After an expedition of this kind it is easy to tell what they have been doing, as they always return home with their tails uncurled, a sure proof that they know they deserve correction. Field-mice, which I imagine they consider akin to the lemmings of their native country, are a constant source of sport and amusement to these dogs. They may be seen by the hour in summer dancing about and playing like kittens when seeking mice in the grass. If a mouse is caught it is rarely eaten, but is tossed about and hidden and dug up again, or perhaps one dog will run off with it and the others after him. The purloiner will then hold the mouse between his paws and turn and face his pursuers, growling furiously and making pretence at being very angry. They are wonderfully gentle with any animals they catch, bringing, for instance, mice, young birds, and small rabbits into the house, which then often run uninjured about the room. A hen-house is, however, an irresistible attraction to them; they will steal the eggs, one by one, and bury them, and they will kill young chicks, not with their mouths, but with their paws, as if in play. Fin dogs are, in fact, full of sporting instinct (an attribute which, I consider, is no detriment to their being the most delightful companions out of doors or by the fireside). They are scarce in England and difficult to obtain, as their exportation from Norway is very strictly forbidden.—RALPH PAYNE GALLWEY.



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